

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

or AWAKENED INDIA

A monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order
started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896



July 2018

Vol. 123, No. 7

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THE ROAD TO WISDOM

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON

Thou Art the Messenger

The ancient message of Krishna is one harmonizing three—Buddha's, Christ's, and Mohammed's. Each of the three started an idea and carried it to its extreme. The characters of the great souls are mysterious, their methods past our finding out. We must not judge them. Christ may judge Mohammed. Who are you and I? Little babies. What do we understand of these great souls. These people were all messengers of God. I fall down and worship them; I take the dust of their feet. [But] we must go ahead! Religion is not an imitation of Jesus. Even if an imitation is good, it is never genuine. Be not an imitation of Jesus, but be Jesus. You are quite as great as Jesus, Buddha, or anybody else. If we are not, we must struggle and be. I would not be exactly like Jesus. It is unnecessary that I should be born a Jew. The greatest religion is to be true to your own nature. Have faith in yourselves! If you do not exist, how can God exist, or anybody else? Wherever you are, it is this mind that perceives even the Infinite. I see God, therefore He exists. If I cannot think of God, He does not exist [for me]. This is the grand march of our human progress. These [great souls] are signposts on the way. That is all they are. They say, 'Onward, brothers!' We cling to them; we never want to move. We do not want to think; we want others to



think for us. The messengers fulfil their mission. They ask to be up and doing. A hundred years later we cling to the message and go to sleep. Talking about faith and belief and doctrine is easy, but it is so difficult to build character and to stem the tide of the senses. We succumb. We become hypocrites. [Religion] is not a doctrine, [not] a rule. It is a process. That is all. [Doctrines and rules] are all for exercise. By that exercise we get strong and at last break the bonds and become free. Doctrine is of no use except for gymnastics. Through exercise the soul becomes perfect. That exercise is stopped when you say, 'I believe.' 'Whenever virtue subsides and immorality abounds, I take human form. In every age I come for the salvation of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, for the establishment of spirituality.' [Such] are the great messengers of light. They are our great teachers, our elder brothers. But we must go our own way!

From *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2016), 1.467-70.



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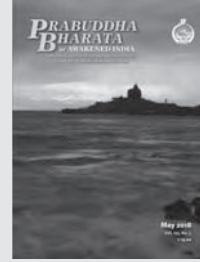
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Date: April 15 2018

Dear Friends,

Please accept our hearty greetings from the Himalayas!

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) had always been attracted by the beauty, sublimity and solitude of the Himalayas. During his tour of the Swiss Alps he conceived the idea to establish an Ashrama in India in similar conditions.

The main heritage building of the Ashrama, where Swami Vivekananda had stayed, is now 120 years old. **It is in a dilapidated condition, and in need of urgent conservation.** The original Prabuddha Bharata editorial office, Captain Henry Sevier's cottage and Mother Sevier's cottage, are also in need of urgent repair. **The overall cost for conservation in this earthquake prone, remote area of Mayavati is 3.92 Cr.**



On 23 March 2018, the work was blessed and inaugurated by the President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Srimat Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj.

We therefore solicit your much needed support to preserve the spiritual atmosphere of Mayavati for future generations. Kindly send a generous donation at your earliest convenience. All donations may be sent in favour of **ADVAITA ASHRAMA by Cheque/Demand Draft/NEFT/RTGS**. Bank details are as follows: Bank Name: State Bank of India, Branch: Lohaghat. **Account No. 10925686743 , IFS Code: SBIN0002569**

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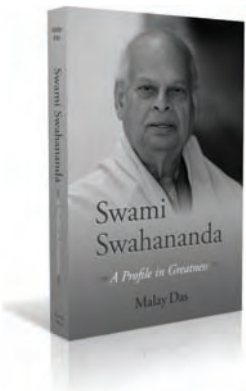
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SWAMI SWAHANANDA *A Profile in Greatness*

by Dr. Malay Das

The spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California for thirty-six years, Swami Swahananda, a direct disciple of Swami Vijnanananda, worked ceaselessly to spread Sri Ramakrishna's message. He established seventeen centers and sub-centers throughout the United States and has left the Ramakrishna movement in the West a rich legacy.

In this intimate, loving portrait, Dr. Malay Das presents Swami Swahananda as he knew him during the last seventeen years of the swami's life. We witness the guru's compassionate care for devotees and disciples, his ability to love with detachment, and his dignity and grace during his final illness.

Written in a simple, lucid and entertaining style, this spiritual biography will inspire sincere spiritual seekers from all traditions and offer them a glimpse into the wonderful life and work of this great monk and spiritual leader.



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Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached!

Maitrayaniya Upanishad

July 2018
Vol. 123, No. 7

मैत्रायणीयोपनिषत्

विग्रहवानेष कालः सिन्धुराजः प्रजानाम् । एष तत्स्थः सवितारख्यो यस्मादेवेमे चन्द्रऋक्षग्रहसंवत्सरादयः
सूयन्तेऽथैभ्यः सर्वमिदमत्र वा यत्किञ्चित् शुभाशुभं दृश्यन्तेह लोके तदेतेभ्यस्तस्मादादित्यात्मा ब्रह्माथ
कालसञ्ज्ञामादित्यमुपासीतादित्यो ब्रह्मेत्येकेऽथ एवं ह्याह ।

होता भोक्ता हविर्मन्त्रो यज्ञो विष्णुः प्रजापतिः ।

सर्वः कश्चित् प्रभुः साक्षी योऽमुस्मिन् भाति मण्डले ॥

॥ ६.१६ ॥

*Vigrahavan-esha kalah sindhurajah prajanam. Esha tatsthab savitakhyo yasmadeveme
chandra-riksha-graha-samvatsaradayah suyante'thaibhyah sarvamidam-atra va yat-kinchit
shubhashubham drishyanteha loka tadetebhyas-tasmad-aditya-atma brahmatha kala-samjnam-
adityam-upasitadityo brahmetyeke'tha evam hyaha.*

Hota bhokta havirmanthro yajno vishnuh prajapatih.

Sarvah kashchit prabhuh sakshi yo'musmin bhati mandale.

(6.16)

This embodied time is the great ocean of beings. In it abides Savitr, from whom, indeed, are born the moon, stars, planets, the year, and the rest. And from them comes this universe and whatever of good or evil is seen in this universe comes from them. Therefore, Brahman is the self of the sun. Therefore, the sun should be worshipped under the name of time. Some say that the sun is Brahman and thus has it been said: 'The performer of sacrifice, the recipient of sacrifice, the oblation, the hymn, the sacrifice, Vishnu, Prajapati, all this is the lord, the witness who shines in distant orb.'

(6.16)

THIS MONTH

TO WHAT EXTENT lie the capabilities of a robot? What essentially is an robot and more importantly what is the nature of this universe? Is a robot conscious? What are conscious beings; what is consciousness? All these issues are discussed in **Is A Robot Conscious?**

In **Swami Vivekananda and Paul Carus: A Rewarding Retrospection**, Somenath Mukherjee, a researcher at Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, explains how Paul Carus developed a sustaining relationship with Swamiji; what brought the sudden Western attraction to Buddhism; how Carus tried to rejuvenate Christianity when it faced higher criticism; and how what both Swamiji and Carus once dreamt together could finally be a reality in recent times.

In **Nouns and Adjectives: Advaita Through the Logic of Grammar**, Bharatwaj Iyer, an economist, blogger, and thinker from Mumbai, shows that to understand the grammatical structure of a proposition leads to a clarity that solves most of the problems involved.

Thoughts on yoga and education are presented in the light of Bhagavadgita by quoting from scriptures and prominent scholars by A P N Pankaj, a littérateur of repute from Chandigarh, in **Education, Yoga, and Bhagavadgita**.

It is not actually possible to be alone. All our ideas of being alone or all feelings of loneliness arise because of our ignorance about our true nature. Swami Pavitrananda, former Minister-in-charge, Vedanta Society of New York discusses this in **Thou Art Never Alone**. This is an edited

transcript of a talk delivered at the Vedanta Society of New York on 6 November 1955.

Meditations on the Upanishads are the class notes on the Upanishads given on Wednesday evenings by Revered Swami Shraddhananda, former Minister-in-charge, Vedanta Society of Sacramento, in 1979. These class notes were taken down in shorthand in 1979 by Cleo aka Satyamayi Anderson and were transcribed many years later with the help of others. The notes are not verbatim and have been edited by Lali Maly and the fourth instalment is being given in **Meditation on the Upanishads**.

Many wonderful nuggets of wisdom contained in ancient scriptures are difficult to understand. In *Balabodha*, such ancient wisdom is made easy. This month's topic is **Samsara**. Understanding this popular word is necessary to understand its meaning.

Even if a person sincerely approaches God for one's wellbeing in this world, that can eventually lead to devotion. This is shown in the fourth instalment of the story **The Miracle that Brought Faith**. This story is this month's *Traditional Tales* and has been translated from the Tamil book *Arulneri Kathaigal*.

Catherine J Turco, the Theodore T Miller Career Development Professor and associate professor of organisation studies at the MIT Sloan School of Management, an ethnographer, and economic sociologist has written the book **The Conversation Firm: Rethinking Bureaucracy in the Age of Social Media**. From this book, we bring you this month's *Manana*.

Is A Robot Conscious?

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT Sophia? Of course, you have! She is a social humanoid robot, who can display more than fifty facial expressions. She has an algorithm that helps her process decisions and speak to others. She is an independent humanoid robot. However, she is not the acme of artificial intelligence as she is just a socially attractive sample of years of research that can do greater wonders than her. Sophia has been given the citizenship of Saudi Arabia making her the first robot citizen of any country. She is also the first nonhuman to receive a United Nations title, that of United Nations Development Programme's first ever Innovation Champion. She has been delivering public talks and taking questions from audiences. However, many a time, she has taken an unduly long pause, or simply not responded to a question, making it obvious that she cannot handle all questions. Sophia might not be the zenith of robotics, but she has led us to the urgency of the question that has been around for almost a century now: can robots be conscious?

What is consciousness? This question has many aspects, more than anyone can be conscious of at any given point in time. Broadly, it is interesting to note that consciousness is usually associated with activity and the ability to respond to stimuli. Before we analyse the spiritual ramifications of this standpoint, we have to first analyse whether this standpoint can stand the test of the benchmark of science. The popular parameters for ascertaining consciousness conveniently ignore many aspects of the universe. For instance, a patient in coma is considered

to be unconscious because she or he cannot respond to stimuli. Then, is a jelly-fish less conscious than a human being? Here, we need to be

A wall is equally conscious as a scientist, the difference is in our perception.

clear about the difference between consciousness and intelligence. We very casually mistake one for the other. All matter respond to the environment. A wall changes according to the air hitting it. Iron corrodes, rusts, and becomes useless with time and neglect. Subatomic particles vibrate and cause changes to matter. Thus, we see response to external stimuli to be a constant feature with all that is present in the universe. Even earth responds differently to different material; different plants and trees grow on different kinds of soils. The interaction between different matter is everlasting. And this interaction does not stop in the space outside our planet Earth. Therefore, it would be untruthful to say that nonliving objects do not respond to the environment.

We confuse consciousness with the perceptibility of a response. While you are reading these words, millions of microbes move around you and are covering the room where you are now. But, you are not perceiving these microbes and so you are not aware of their being conscious. Healthcare professionals always look for perceptibility of the responses of the patient. If a patient can speak, but chooses not to, it would be highly difficult, almost impossible for a healthcare professional to find that there is no impairment. Of


course, the patient has to be equally resolute! A person is a bundle of traits acquired from perceptions that are unique to that person.

A big argument against the possibility of humanoids being able to do things intelligently like human beings, or in many cases, better than human beings, is that they cannot do so till today. But, that is a problem of how to get humanoids do things intelligently; basically it is a problem of the engineers. If a humanoid can have even the least fraction of self-learning abilities of a human being, then analytically speaking, it can have the entire self-learning intelligent ability of the humans; it is only a matter of time, research, development, and implementation. As Swami Vivekananda used to say, the question of the philosopher is not 'how' but 'why'? The relevant question in this context would be why cannot a humanoid be conscious? When we continuously pose this question and differentiate it from the problems of technology today, we would immediately understand that a humanoid is already conscious as is every least and minutest particle of this universe.

If clarity and definitiveness were parameters of consciousness, human beings will qualify as unconscious many times. What with the unspeakable atrocities perpetrated by one human being over the other, perplexity and confusion have found newer levels of intensity and one cannot blame Sophia to have speechless moments as even human beings, masses of them, are dumbfounded over the circumstances of human societies, and also due to the senseless actions of fellow humans. Both robots and humans dream, for robots dreaming is the manifestation of bugs in the programming or glitches in hardware; for the human beings dreaming is the unwinding of psychological complexities. Bugs debilitate a robot; complexities hound a human being. Self-reflection is also told to be one of the characteristic features of consciousness. Then, plants and trees would not be conscious;

that cannot be, as their consciousness has been proved long ago by Jagadish Chandra Bose.

Just as a mute and deaf person is not less conscious, just as a mentally challenged person is not less conscious, Sophia is also conscious and the source of her consciousness is not a bunch of algorithms or programming given to her, but the ultimate Truth of Brahman. Instead of seeing the infinite masquerading as the finite, we see the finite taking on the properties of the conscious and getting caught in the eternal debate that arises because of confusing the unconscious with the conscious. There is nothing unconscious in the universe; properly perceived, there is nothing but consciousness. We draw boundaries in consciousness and gauge degrees of consciousness because of ignorance. In fact, this whole discussion about consciousness is not an intelligent discussion but a discussion necessitated and born out of ignorance.

It is quite simple a problem for the Advaita Vedantin. For her or him, consciousness alone exists eternally; whatever is perceived is unreal and is born out of ignorance. From this standpoint of Truth, a wall is equally conscious as a scientist, the difference is in our perception. That is why, we are caught up in the transmigratory cycle of repeated births and deaths, of unceasing suffering. We suffer because we are unable to see that there is no suffering in reality and there is only knowledge and bliss eternally. 'Everything is Brahman', say the Upanishads; 'Only Brahman is', says Swamiji. Same truth, told variously. Essentially, Brahman is the only reality and that would be so, irrespective of whether we perceive it or not. Just because the wall is not crying aloud that Brahman is the only reality, does not stop Brahman being so. In fact, we are driven by ignorance to such an extent that we want every being and object to be part of this ignorance and forget that it is because of consciousness that we are playing the game of ignorance. 

Swami Vivekananda and Paul Carus: A Rewarding Retrospection

Somenath Mukherjee

THE WEST STILL REMEMBERS Paul Carus for various reasons; though the foremost has always been his role during a crucial time when the West was in the process of re-examining and reinterpreting the cores of Christian religious tenets. While looking at his contribution in this regard we shall, as well, see how his attraction to Swami Vivekananda grew into a lasting relationship. More so, our interest in Carus and his time will allow us a glimpse of the West when Swamiji moved around there and left his unmistakable mark.

Paul Carus first saw Swamiji at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Though his religious priorities differed with what Swamiji preached, that hardly mattered when he was drawn to the catholicity and brilliance of Swamiji's message. And it is significant that what they dreamt about and even tried to work together for has finally come into shape in the recent past. Besides, notwithstanding his declared distance from what Swamiji preached, it was Paul Carus who resolutely foiled a heinous attempt to malign the name of Swamiji just when the latter was no more. Of these we shall talk later. First we will look into who exactly Paul Carus was.

2

Even today the 'Front Matter' in every quarterly issue of *The Monist* displays these words:

Paul Carus, the first editor of *The Monist*, was born in Ilsenberg am Harz on July 18, 1852, and

died in La Salle, Illinois, on February 11, 1919. After receiving his Ph.D. degree in philosophy and classical philology from Tübingen University in 1876, he taught briefly at the State Military Academy at Dresden. In search of freedom for expression of his independent views, he migrated first to England and then to the United States. In 1887, he accepted the invitation of Edward C. Hegeler (who later became his father-in-law) to edit *The Open Court* magazine, a monthly journal devoted primarily to comparative religion. In 1888, *The Monist* was established as a quarterly journal of the philosophy of science, and Paul Carus served as editor of both journals and as editor of the Open Court Publishing Company until his death in 1919.¹

Incidentally, Edward Hegeler had also been an extremely successful German immigrant in the US. His brief profile reads:

Mr. Hegeler had come from Bremen ... Edward was sent to the Academy at Schnepfenthal for a time, and later to the Polytechnic Institute of Hanover where he devoted his attention to mechanical Engineering. This was followed by a course in the School of Mines at Freiberg, Saxony. ... Three years later, in 1860, he came to America with his friend and fellow-student F.W. Matthiessen, each with ideas of building up a zinc plant such as had not as yet been established in the United States.²

This was the story of the Matthiessen and Hegeler Zinc Company of La Salle, Illinois, which had been in existence from 1858 to 1978. But apart from his industrial ambitions, Hegeler

had other inclinations too. He founded and endowed the Open Court Publishing Company, which first brought out *The Open Court* in 17 February 1887, followed by *The Monist* on 1 October 1890; the former in its first year ran as a fortnightly, and then was changed to a weekly before becoming a monthly journal since 1897, illustrated and popular in style. *The Monist* began as a quarterly serving the same purpose, though open 'to a more rigorous scientific treatment of religio-philosophical questions'.³

It is obviously significant that *Brahmavadin*, the magazine started in Madras at the behest of Swamiji since mid-September 1895 under the owner-editorship of Alasinga Perumal, had frequent exchanges of articles, views, and the like, with both *The Open Court* and *The Monist*.

3

In his lecture at California on 1 February 1900 Swamiji said: 'If you want to know the source of Emerson's inspiration, it is this book, the Gita. He went to see Carlyle, and Carlyle made him a present of the Gita; and that little book is responsible for the Concord Movement. All the broad movements in America, in one way or other, are indebted to the Concord party.'⁴ Much later another book evoked great impact on the West.

Professor Harold A Netland of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, considered by many as an authority in the field of religious pluralism, writes:



Paul Carus (1852–1919)

In the United States during the 1840s, transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau were fascinated by the Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Later in the nineteenth century Buddhism became sufficiently attractive to American intellectuals that prominent Christians began to speak of Buddhism as a threat to Christianity. The remarkable popular appeal of Buddhism is illustrated in the phenomenal success of the *Light of the Asia*, a poem about the life of Gautama the Buddha published in 1879 by Sir Edwin Arnold. The book went through sixty English and eighty American editions, selling between half a million and one million copies in the United States and England. ... A Buddhist participant at the Parliament, Shaku Soen, recruited his disciple D. T. Suzuki as a Buddhist missionary to the West. Suzuki arrived in the U.S. in 1897, and during the next five decades he split his time between Japan and America, lecturing and writing on Buddhism for Westerners. Suzuki became the most influential spokesman for Buddhism in the West.⁵

It was Paul Carus who became the chief patron to both Shaku Soen and, to a much greater extent, D T Suzuki in their propagating roles in the West, the US in particular. We should remember that Paul Carus came from the Tübingen University, the birthplace of 'Higher Criticism'⁶ which had rocked the accepted ideas and beliefs in Christian theology, mythical Christianity to be more specific, and left indelible impact on the Western minds. It is found that:

American academia, where [Philip] Schaff and most of his colleagues held forth, was coming into its own in the 1870s and 1880s. Loosely inspired by German models, many American colleges were reconceiving themselves as 'research universities' devoted to the impartial pursuit of knowledge. ... Professionalization in biblical studies went hand in hand with new methods of enquiry, particularly the 'higher criticism' imported from Germany to England and America throughout the nineteenth century. New Testament higher criticism emerged during the 1830s in the Tübingen School of Ferdinand Christian Baur and his pupil, David Friedrich Strauss, who interpreted biblical miracle stories as 'myths' and construed early Christianity's differentiation from Judaism in terms of Hegelian philosophy.⁷

To understand the exact social milieu when Swamiji appeared in the US, we may see what a Western scholar recently wrote:

By the 1890s America was caught in the throes of a spiritual crisis affecting Christendom worldwide. Modern scientific discoveries had so undermined a literal interpretation of sacred scripture that for many educated and thoughtful people it was no longer certain that God was in his heaven and that all was right with the world. These rapid changes of transformations in almost every aspect of traditional faith had such irreversible corrosive effects on religious orthodoxy that they were dubbed 'acids of modernity'.⁸

The same author writes about what followed: 'They ate away at received convictions and ushered in an unprecedented erosion of belief. People like my grandparents, brought up with rock-solid belief in the infallible word of God, found their faith shaken to its very foundation. It was as if overnight they suddenly awoke to a new world governed not by theological authority but by scientists' (ibid.).

4

Referring to the World's Parliament of Religions, Paul Carus writes:

There are two kinds of Christianity. One is love and charity; it wants the truth brought out and desires to see it practically applied in daily life. It is animated by the spirit of Jesus and tends to broaden the minds of men. The other is pervaded with exclusiveness and bigotry; it does not aspire through Christ to the truth; but takes Christ, as tradition has shaped his life and doctrines, to be the truth itself. It naturally lacks charity and hinders the spiritual growth of men.⁹

If one reads these words intently, echoes of what Swamiji said at Chicago could never be missed.

When Carus came to the World's Parliament of Religions his interest in Eastern theology had been predominantly restricted to Buddhism. Nonetheless, his open mind hardly remained inattentive to the brilliance of Swamiji and his message. His written words, while contrasting the views of a section of the Christian representatives with that of the Eastern delegates, justify our view:

There were a few voices heard at the Parliament of Religions which breathed this narrow and so-called orthodox Christianity, but they could hardly be regarded as characterising the spirit of the whole enterprise. They really served as a contrast by which the tolerant principles of our Oriental guests shone the more brightly. 'The Hindu fanatic', said Vivekananda, 'burns himself on the pyre, but he never lights the fagots of an Inquisition';¹⁰ and we were told that Buddha said to his disciples, 'I forbid you to believe anything simply because I said it'.¹¹

Carus easily found truth in what Swamiji said during his early appearance at the World's Parliament of Religions. He writes:

The severest rebuke came from the lips of the representative of Jainism, and from the monk Vivekananda. The latter denounced Christian missionaries for offering stones instead of bread.

They build churches, he said, and preach sectarian creeds which benefit no one. They despise the sacred traditions of the Hindu, the profundity of which they are unable to fathom; and, he added, 'What shall we think of a religion whose missionaries distribute food in a famine to the starving people on the condition of conversion?' (7–8).

Carus even allowed us a glimpse of what followed such tirade of Swamiji:

Bishop Keane, Rector of the Roman Catholic University at Washington, was not lacking in this broad religious spirit. 'I indorse', [*sic*] said the Bishop, impressively, 'the denunciation hurled against the system of pretended charity that offered food to the hungry Hindus at the cost of their conscience and their faith. It is a shame and disgrace to all who call themselves Christians. And if Vivekananda by his criticism can only stir us and sting us into better teachings and better doings in the great work of Christ, I for one shall be profoundly grateful to our friend the great Hindu monk' (9).

5

His experience at the World's Parliament of Religions drew Paul Carus more intensely to Buddhism. But his attraction to Buddhism had its own agendas and therefore, was not an end in itself. Proof is here:

After the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, one Paul Carus, one Chicago-based editor of *Open Court Press*, invited some of the influential Japanese Buddhist delegates to a week-long discussion at the home of Carus's father-in-law, Edward Hegeler. Both deeply felt the spiritual crisis of the times. Both were trying to reform Christianity to bring it in line with current thought—in short, to make religion scientific. It occurred to them that Buddhism was already compatible with science and could be used to nudge Christianity in the same direction. Toward this end, Carus wanted to support

Buddhist missionary movement to the United States from Asia. His thinking was to create something of a level playing field. ... With the aid of his wealthy father-in-law who put up the money, he sponsored a number of Eastern Missionaries to the United States: Anagarika Dharmapala, from what was then Ceylon, now Sri Lanka; Swami Vivekananda, from India, representing the Ramakrishna Vedanta Movement; and Soyen Shaku, a Japanese Buddhist monk, and Shaku's young disciple D.T. Suzuki.¹²

We may slightly step aside and include something from the same text to inspire a guess as to why Buddhism began to attract the Westerners almost en masse: 'Early missionaries of Buddhism to the West, including Carus himself, all shared the same modern, reformist outlook. They translated Buddhism into a medium and a message compatible and resonant with the scientific and progressive spirit of the age' (81). No less curious was the way in which the task was accomplished; the text continues: 'They selected passages of text to favor that slant, and carefully presented the Buddhist teachings in such a way as to appeal to modern sensibilities—empirical, rational and liberal. Americans wanted religion to "make sense", to accord with conventional wisdom' (*ibid.*).

Nonetheless, Paul Carus could hardly escape the magnetism of Swamiji even after the World's Parliament of Religions was over. This is explicit in his latter-day writings. Even the very utterance of Swamiji which shook the Christian world to its core at the World's Parliament of Religions did not escape Carus's admiration; in his words one finds how he imbibed the essence of Swamiji's teachings:

The breadth of Vivekananda's religious views appeared when he said: 'The same light shines through all colors, and in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has

declared to the Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna, "I am in every religion, as the thread through a string of pearls, and wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity know ye that I am there."¹³

Carus was basically an intellectual with a mind predisposed to a love for progressive reforms in religion and religious ideas of his time, though alongside he had a longing for what is finer in religion. May be this had allowed a visionary aspect in what he wrote:

Any one who attended these congresses must have felt the thrill of the divine spirit that was moving through the minds of the congregation. We may rest assured that the event is greater than its promoters ever dreamed of. They builded [*sic*] better than they knew. How small are we mortal men who took an active part in the Parliament in comparison with the movement which it inaugurated! And this movement indicates the extinction of the old narrowness and the beginning of a new era of broader and higher religious life (17).

And how he understood the real efficacy of the occasion and the necessity of its continuity is here in his succeeding lines:

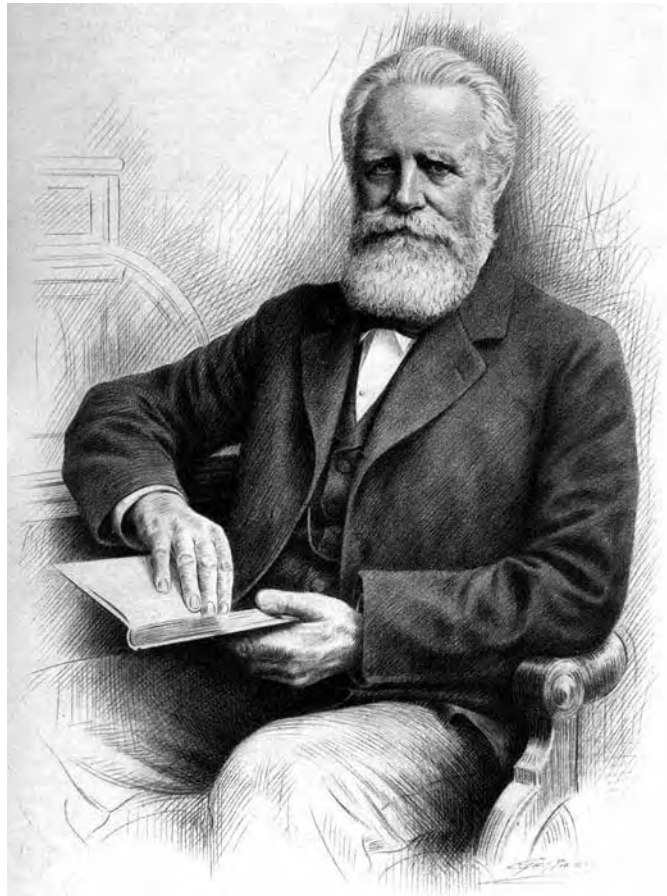
It is proposed that another Parliament of Religions be convened in the year 1900 at the ancient city of Bombay, where we may find a spiritual contrast between the youngest city and the oldest, and pay a tribute from the daughter to the mother. Other appropriate places for Religious Parliaments would be Jerusalem, the Holy City of three great religions, or some port of Japan where Shintoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity peacefully develop side

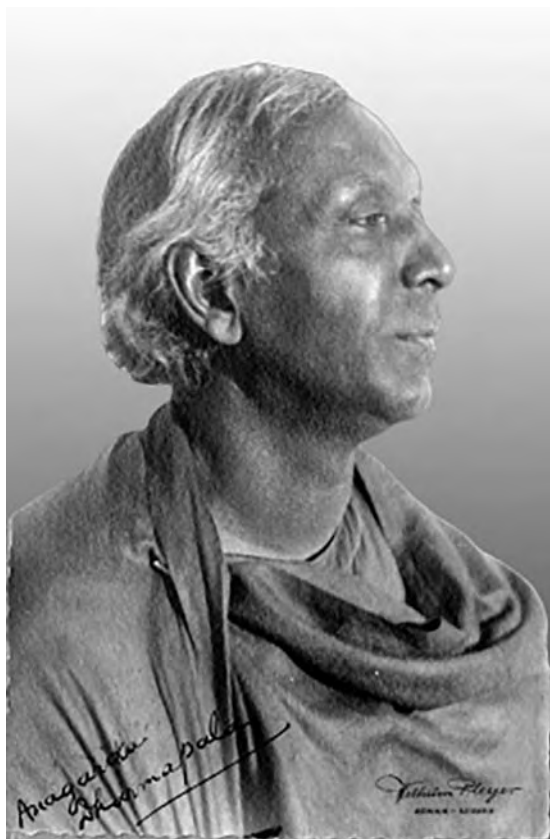
by side, exhibiting conditions which invite a comparison fair to all? (17-8).

Carus had been a visionary no doubt, but he never allowed his optimism to eclipse his doubts:

Whether or not the Parliament of Religions be repeated, whether or not its work will be continued, the fact remains that this congress at Chicago will exert a lasting influence upon the religious intelligence of mankind. It has stirred the spirits, stimulated mental growth, and given direction to man's further evolution. It is by no means an agnostic movement, for it is carried on the wings of a religious faith and positive certainty. ... The religion of the future, as the opinions presented indicate, will be that religion which can rid itself of all narrowness, of all demand for blind subordination, of the

Edward C Hegeler (1835-1910)





Anagarika Dharmapala (1864–1933)

sectarian spirit, and of the Phariseism which takes it for granted that its own devotees alone are good and holy, while the virtues of others are but polished vices' (18).

We find an unmistakable echo of Swamiji's concluding speech at the World's Parliament of Religions on 27 September 1893 when he said:

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon

be written, in spite of resistance: 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension'.¹⁴

But it hardly remained as an ambition. For a decision was taken even before 1899 to continue such noble efforts though it soon failed to sustain the enthusiasm. But we shall later see how what Swamiji and Paul Carus once dreamt together would finally take shape.

6

On 24 July 1895 the *New York Times* reports about the previous day: 'The Oak Beach Christian Unity Conference was called to order this morning. Col. Horner B. Sprague was elected President. The Rev. John D. Long and the Rev. Josiah Strong, Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, made addresses at the morning session.'¹⁵ The aim and objective of the conference is evident from its very name. More is here in what the *New York Times* article titled 'Pastors Urge Christian Unity', wrote on 26 July:

Dr. Hageman, President of the Church Federation of New York, thought that local federation of the churches in New York was necessary, or the churches would go to the wall. The churches are like patients who do not get on well because they think too much on their ailments. If they worked in common they would think nothing of themselves, but of the poor, of social evils, and political needs, and would be more likely to work out the world's salvation.¹⁶

With this backdrop let us see what Swamiji writes to Mrs Sara Bull on 13 July 1895 [post-marked 11 July 1895] from Thousand Island Park: 'There is one invitation from the Christian Union of Oak Beach. I do not know whether I will go there. As I intend to go to Chicago, in August, I ought to give to the people here all the time I can.'¹⁷ Incidentally, during this time Swamiji was staying at Thousand Island Park with a few of his

chosen disciples who were ready to receive his sublime message. He arrived at Thousand Island on 18 June 1895 and remained there till 7 August before leaving for New York City. As is yet known he never left this place during these seven weeks' stay. But the *Open Court* of 24 July 1895 writes:

The Christian Unity Conference is now in session at Oak Island Beach, Long Island, N.Y. The idea of the Conference is to bring the various denominational divisions of Christianity in the United States closer together ... Swami Vivekananda and Dr. Paul Carus will speak on the World's Religions Parliament Extension. The officers of the Conference have chosen as their place of meeting one of the pleasantest resorts on the Atlantic Coast and a large attendance may be expected, as also beneficent results.¹⁸

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle of 28 July 1895, while listing the names of the attending speakers, mentioned: 'Swami Vivekananda and Dr. Paul Carus, the editor of the *Monist*' among them.¹⁹ Also *The New York Tribune* of the same date wrote:

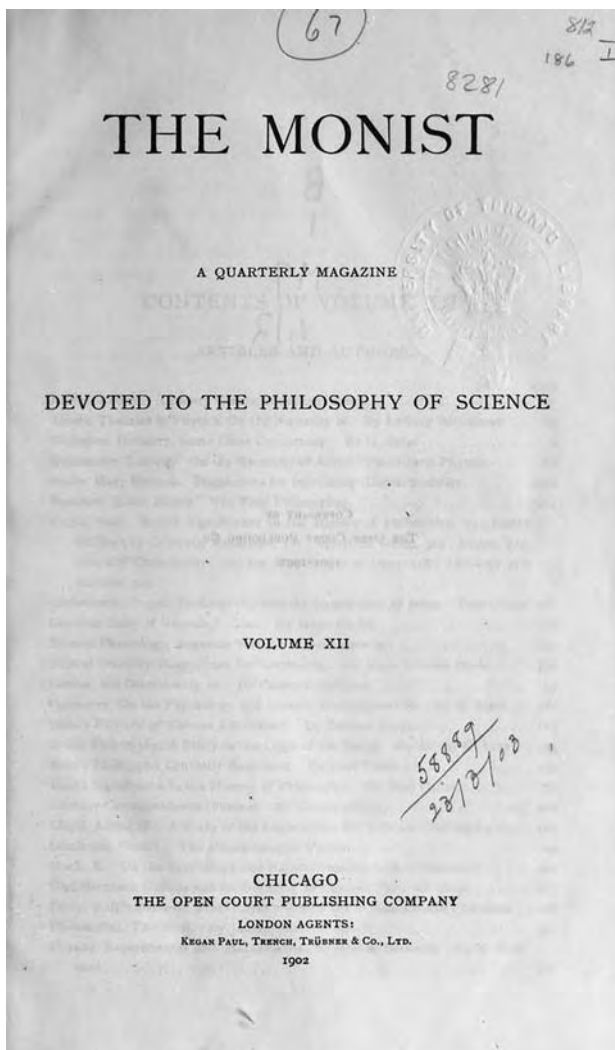
The Oak Beach Christian Unity was addressed yesterday afternoon by the Oriental, Swami Vivekananda. He spoke of the world-wide unity, and said that all religions were, at the bottom, alike. This was so, although the Christian Church, like the Pharisee in the parable, thanks God that it alone is right, and is willing to admit that all other religions are wrong and in need of Christian light. Christianity must become tolerant before the world will be willing to unite with the Christian Church in a common charity, he said. God had not left Himself without a witness in any heart, and men, especially men who follow Jesus Christ, should be willing, he said, to admit this. In fact, Jesus Christ was willing to admit every good man to the family of God. It was not the man who believed something, but the man who did the will of the Father in Heaven who was right. On this basis being right and doing right—the whole world can unite, he contended. Dr. Paul

Carus also spoke during the afternoon about the World's Parliament Extension. This organization proposes to extend the work of the Chicago parliament. It is proposed to hold such a parliament in this city next spring. These parliaments will show the world that by taking what is best in each religion and improving the various religions up to this level there shall be had the religion of the twentieth century.²⁰

A report in the *Brahmavadin* of 28 September 1895 has obvious relevance to the above: 'We are glad to learn that Swami Vivekananda is still actively engaged in the propagation of the Vedanta-religion in the West. Both he and Dr. Paul Caurns [*sic*] are said to have recently addressed a large audience in New York in connection with the Parliament of Religions extension.'²¹

Therefore, we face a contradiction here. A little before we saw that Swamiji never left the Thousand Island Park during his entire sojourn; while now, contrarily, two newspaper reports say otherwise. We have an apparently acceptable conjecture in this regard from Marie Louise Burke, the eminent researcher; she writes:

If we were to judge by the newspapers alone, it would seem clear that Swamiji spoke at Oak Island Beach on the afternoon of Saturday, July 27. But looking into *Inspired Talks* we find that he held a class that morning at Miss Dutcher's cottage on the *Katha Upanishad*. Not by the fastest train could he have been at Oak Island Beach that afternoon! Nor could he have been back at the cottage on Sunday morning (when he also held a class), for no steamers or boats were allowed to dock at Thousand Island Park on Sundays. ... The most probable explanation is that Swamiji did not appear in person at the Oak Beach Conference but sent a short paper, which was read by someone else, the reporters not knowing the difference. Until more information comes to light, I think we shall have to suppose that this was the case.²²



The Monist, Volume 12, 1902

Till now we have nothing more to add to what Burke said. But almost at this time Swamiji had another invitation to which he was eager to respond. But this time the difficulty arose elsewhere. We have reason to guess that this invitation had in background the role of Dr Carus. But the invitees, however magnanimous they initially were, seemingly gave a rethought as to having Swamiji. Let us see what eventually happened.

7

Swamiji writes to Mrs Bull on 28 May 1895: 'I am going next Tuesday with Mr. Leggett to Maine. He has a fine lake and a forest there. I will be two or three weeks there. Thence I go to the Thousand Islands. Also I have an invitation to speak at a parliament of religions at Toronto, Canada, on July 18th. I will go there from Thousand Islands and return back.'²³ More information is available in the *New York Times* of 19 July 1895: 'The Pan American Congress of Religion and Education was formally opened this afternoon at the Horticultural Gardens Pavilion. ... Numerous distinguished visitors have arrived. ... The attendance of delegates at the opening numbered nearly a thousand.'²⁴

How eager Swamiji had been to attend this occasion is revealed in what he wrote to Carus on 28 May: 'I am just now in receipt of your letter and will be very happy to join the religions Congress at Toronto. Only, as you are well aware of, the financial means of a "Bhikshu" are very limited.' The letter concludes with a significant note: 'I will be only too glad to do anything in my power to help you and wait further particulars and directions.'²⁵

While researching for this article I came to know that many of the personal papers of Paul Carus are for long lying with the Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Contact was immediately made, which rewarded me with copies of a few vital letters. In one of such dated 31 May 1895 Carus wrote to Swamiji:

Your letter was received and I am very glad that you will join the Congress. I at once advised the leaders of the Congress of your acceptance. Concerning the financial question I wrote to Dr. Smith and have been told that they have a small fund from which they can pay the expenses of a

few speakers. I shall at once communicate your address to Dr. Smith, and you will hear from him directly. I intend to visit the Congress and shall be very glad to meet you again.²⁶

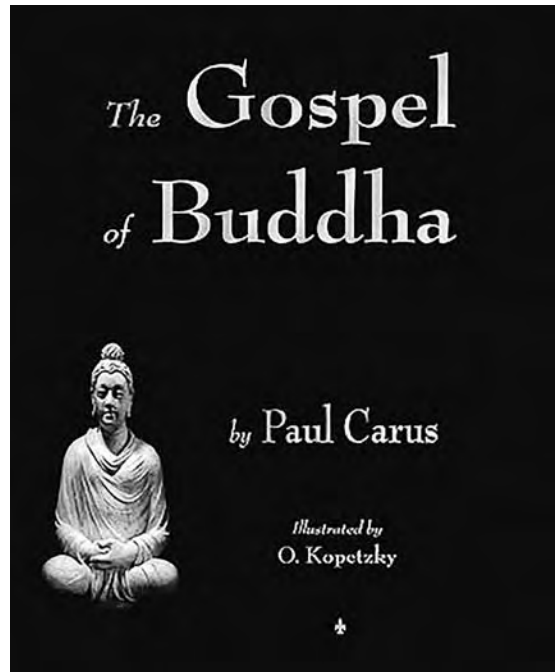
Further proof of his wish to attend the Toronto Congress is explicit in what Swamiji wrote to Carus in June [date unknown] 1895 from Thousand Island Park:

I am in this place now and had to change some of my plans on account of the Toronto Congress. I am therefore not quite sure whether I will be able to come to Oak Island Conference. It is very possible, however, that I will be able to do so. I also hope Mr. [Charles Carroll] Bonney will come. He is a noble, noble soul—one who sincerely wishes the fellowship of all humanity. ... I will certainly try my best to come.

In the postscript to this letter Swamiji made a very noteworthy request which perhaps is indicative of a collective wish he shared with Carus to sustain the efforts which began at the Religious Parliament in Chicago: 'Will you kindly inform me what lines of thought you want me to take.'²⁷

But the organisers of the meet, whatsoever had initially prompted them to have Swamiji among them, seemingly began to apprehend a recurrence of what transpired at the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions of 1893 where an undaunted young Indian monk overshadowed all others. No doubt they had their own agendas and hence disallowed history to repeat itself. Proof of what we say is more than apparent in the letter Carus wrote to Swamiji on 8 June 1895:

Mr. Sherin²⁸ of Toronto writes me as follows: 'The clergymen of the city were very *unanimous* in objecting to having Swami Vivekananda.' This, of course, makes it more than doubtful whether we shall have the pleasure of meeting at Toronto. I have taken all the steps to change the minds of the Pan American Congress committee, and have requested Mr. Bonney [Charles C



Cover Page of The Gospel of Buddha by Paul Carus

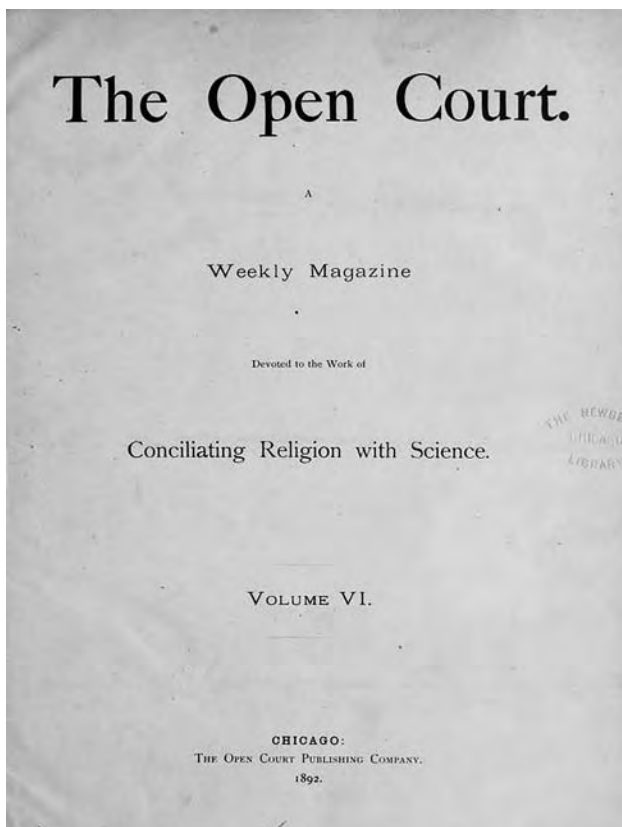
Bonney, President of the World's Congresses at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893] to write to them in your behalf. I hope that shall succeed in the end. In the mean time I wish to let you know how matters stand, so that you may be prepared for the worst.²⁹

We hardly know yet whether further efforts were taken to change the minds of the 'objecting' clergies, but what followed is available in the letter Swamiji wrote to Mrs Bull on 13 [postmarked 11] July 1895 from Thousand Island Park: 'The Toronto affair has fallen through because the clergyman objected to a heathen.'³⁰

8

While writing this article I could get access to the following obituary note as had been published in the *Open Court* of September 1902:

A cable notice from Calcutta announces the death of Swami Vivekananda, the Hindu monk who represented a Pantheistic Brahmanism at



The Open Court, Volume 6, 1892

the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893. His philosophy is a modernised Vedantism which he explained in a booklet entitled *Raja Yoga*. His admirers collected money to build a place for him in India where he could teach his religious views. There, at his beautiful residence on the banks of the Ganges near Calcutta, he died July last at the premature age of forty years. It remains to be seen whether his life work possesses sufficient vitality to survive him. It seems that he was more an advocate of Vedantism to the West than a prophet and reformer of his own countrymen in the East. And certainly, his propaganda was most successful, not in India, but among the lovers of Oriental mysticism in the West, especially in America.³¹

This obituary note had a little background which betrays the intellectual integrity of Dr

Carus, if not his respect for Swamiji. But before that let us first read what Marie Louise Burke writes: 'On Swamiji's death, [Anagarika] Dharmapala wrote a defamatory obituary letter to Dr. Paul Carus for publication in the *Open Court* magazine. I have seen a copy of this letter, which outdid even the Christian missionaries in vindictiveness and malice. Dr. Carus, Swamiji's friend, declined to publish it.'³²

It is most surprising that a close friend and admirer like Dharmapala could ever do such things to Swamiji. *The Indian Mirror* of 12 April 1894 writes: 'Mr. Dharmapala is of opinion that the success of the World's Parliament of Religions was, to a great extent, due to Swami Vivekananda.'³³ The same paper on 18 May 1894 wrote something which stands witness to what Dharmapala once thought of Swamiji following the World's Parliament of Religions: 'Mr. Dharmapala's lecture at the Minerva Theatre, Calcutta, on Monday evening last, was

"Swami Vivekananda and Hinduism in America" and the manner in which the theme was treated, proved the good feeling and friendliness which the Buddhists bear towards Hindus and Hinduism' (22). Then what went wrong? True, till now we had no access to what exactly Dharmapala wrote to Dr Carus to influence him against Swamiji. But we managed to get the letter Carus wrote to him on 23 August 1902 before publishing the above obituary. It reads in part: 'As to your notice on Vivekananda, I have after a careful consideration come to the conclusion that it is better to make a simple statement of facts. I agree with you that his Vedantism is injurious, that it led him to Hedonism and to a philosophy which lacked in seriousness, but I know nothing as to the cause of his death. If you have any positive knowledge about it, please let me know.'³⁴

No news as to whether Dharmapala further pursued the matter or not is yet known, though one hardly needs to guess what had been in his mind. The views Dr Carus expressed in this letter had obviously been his own and today we no longer have the need to refute them anymore. But one may ask what made Dharmapala suddenly so unfriendly to Swamiji? This had in background what Swamiji wrote to Mrs Bull on 5 May 1897:

I have a very kind letter from Prof. Janes in which he points out my remarks about degraded Buddhism. You also write that Dharmapala is very wroth about it. Mr. Dharmapala is a good man, and I love him; but it would be entirely wrong for him to go into fits over things Indian. I am perfectly convinced that what they call modern Hinduism with all its ugliness is only stranded Buddhism. Let the Hindus understand this clearly, and then it would be easier for them to reject it without murmur. As for the ancient form which the Buddha preached, I have the greatest respect for it, as well as for His person. And you well know that we Hindus worship Him as an Incarnation. Neither is the Buddhism of Ceylon any good. My visit to Ceylon has entirely disillusioned me, and the only living people there are the Hindus. The Buddhists are all much Europeanised—even Mr. Dharmapala and his father had European names, which they have since changed. The only respect the Buddhists pay to their great tenet of non-killing is by opening “butcher-stalls” in every place! And the priests encourage this. The real Buddhism, I once thought, would yet do *much good*. But I have given up the idea entirely, and I clearly see the reason why Buddhism was driven out of India, and we will only be too glad if the Ceylonese carry off the remnant of this religion with its hideous idols and licentious rites.³⁵

But did Swamiji say anything wrong or unjust in his letter to drive Dharmapala to such an extent? Let us see what exactly had been the picture during that time. In 1888 Reginald Stephen wrote in the *Nineteenth Century*: ‘What



The Monist, Cover, April 2018

is really vital—what is most practically the refuge of a Ceylon Buddhist—is not anything truly Buddhistic, but the system of astrology, charms, devil-dancing and other low superstitions which clings to the lowest part of Hinduism.’³⁶ If we look elsewhere for more contemporary views it hardly would go against what appears here about the situation in erstwhile Ceylon.

Epilogue

In the first edition of his book entitled *The Dawn of a New Era* Paul Carus wrote:

Those who are interested in the religious development of mankind may be glad to know, that the work of the Parliament of Religions may be continued. Under Mr. Bonney’s direction a local committee has been formed among the members

of which are Dr. Bristol, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Gilbert, Dr. Dellano, Mrs. Harbert, and the writer of this article. The committee is in connexion with advisory councils all over the world, and it has been decided to name the new movement 'The World's Religious Parliament Extension.'³⁷

But differing information came up in the second edition of the same book: 'For reasons which need not be explained here, all attempts to continue the Parliament of Religions were failures. Under Mr. Bonney's direction a local committee tried to keep up a propaganda under the name of the World's Religious Parliament Extension, but its work found no response and was practically futile.'³⁸

Swamiji left the world on 4 July 1902; Paul

Carus followed on 11 February 1919. But the seed of their ambition kept on working unknowingly in the hearts of a few people around the globe till the sprouting began. In the spring of 1988 the Parliament of the World's Religions was formed to prepare for a centennial celebration in Chicago. More than 150 religious and spiritual leaders from around the globe came to attend the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, which was held between 28 August and 5 September. Above 8,000 people came to attend the occasion which allowed the religious and spiritual leaders to discuss and share their goodwill and visions of hope for a better world in an informal environment. But this hardly remained confined into a mere centennial affair, as we gradually saw

Hegeler Carus Mansion on Seventh Street in LaSalle, Illinois



the successive meets that followed in Cape Town (1999), Barcelona (2004), Melbourne (2009) and Salt Lake (2015). The next one will be held at Toronto from 1 to 7 November, 2018.

Since the Congress in 2004 the 'Paul Carus Award for Interreligious Understanding' is being given 'in recognition of an individual, community or organization that has contributed in an extraordinary way to the international interreligious movement'. It has been declared and arranged by the family of Paul Carus; they also 'had pledged an additional \$1 million in support of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions'.³⁹ Now the question arises whether Swamiji is still remembered in the ongoing occasions which in essence carry the legacy of the great event of 1893 where, as had unhesitatingly been acknowledged by the contemporary American press, his ideas and teachings drew the highest accolades. Let us see what the *National Catholic Reporter* of Kansas City, while reporting the inaugural session of the Melbourne Congress, wrote on 4 December 2009: 'The "superstar" at the 1893 Parliament was an obscure Bengali ascetic, Swami Vivekananda. "I am proud", Vivekananda began his address, "to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true."⁴⁰

And in the concluding plenary on 9 December 2009 His Holiness Dalai Lama, among others, spoke about peace and harmony. In his speech, the Dalai Lama hailed Swami Vivekananda as responsible for bringing about 'revival of Interreligious discourse. He reminisced about his visit to Kanyakumari ... and the inspiration he derived from there. He urged everyone to draw inspiration from the Swami's Spirit and move forward to making the world a better place to live.'⁴¹

And thus we know for sure that great legacies never die.



Notes and References

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2. David Eugene Smith, 'Mary Hegeler Carus, 1861-1936', *The American Mathematical Monthly*, 44/5 (May 1937), 280.
3. The Editor [Paul Carus], 'In Memory of Mr. E. C. Hegeler', *The Open Court*, 24/7 (July 1910), 390.
4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 9 vols (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1-8, 1989; 9, 1997), 4.95.
5. Harold Netland, 'The East Comes to West (Or Why Jesus Instead of Buddha?)', *Passionate Conviction: Contemporary Discourses on Christian Apologetics*, ed. Paul Copan and William Lane Craig (Tennessee: B and H, 2007), 155-6.
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7. Peter Johannes Thuesen, *In Discordance with the Scriptures: American Protestant Battles Over Translating the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 44.
8. Dr Martin J Verhoeven, 'Buddhism and Science: Probing the Boundaries of Faith and Reason', *Religion East and West*, 1 (June 2001), 79 <https://issuu.com/drbu/docs/issue1_article_8> accessed 11 June 2018.
9. Dr Paul Carus, *The Dawn of a New Religious Era and Other Essays* (Chicago: The Open Court, 1899), 5.

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12. 'Buddhism and Science: Probing the Boundaries of Faith and Reason', 80–1.
13. *The Dawn of a New Religious Era and Other Essays*, 12–3.
14. *Complete Works*, 1.24.
15. 'The Christian Unity Conference', *The New York Times*, 24 July 1895, 8 <<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9501E2D9103DE433A25757C2A9619C94649ED7CF>> accessed 11 June 2018.
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23. *Complete Works*, 9.59–60.
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25. *Complete Works*, 9.60.
26. Sourced from the letters made available by Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.
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Nouns and Adjectives: Advaita Through the Logic of Grammar

Bharatwaj Iyer

GRAMMAR COULD BE defined as the study of the structure of sentences. Such a study of structure leads to the formulation of rules, which help us construct sentences that are logically consistent and which express meaning in the clearest form. The descriptive and normative components of grammar are thus seen to go together. What grammar describes though, more so than what it prescribes, has implications deeper than is often realised. Human language is the very vehicle of human thought; in fact, one could say, language *is* thought. The language we use contributes to our understanding of reality, and the reality we experience impacts our language, forming a two-way relationship. Language and the logic of its rules are innate to the structure of our thought, and this innate structure of our thought, contributive to the forms of our thinking, assigns structure to external reality. We can see that we are now moving along the borderline that separates grammar from logic, the formal discipline that studies the validity of statements. This relationship between grammar and logic need not concern us so much in this essay, one that is burdened with so much more to explain, except that we realise that knowing which of the two is the more general and which contains the other is a subject requiring a separate study on its own. One can make the case though, obvious when made, that to understand the grammatical structure of a proposition leads to a clarity

that solves most of the problems involved. This I wish to demonstrate with an example from Aristotle's *Categories*, which being an instance of a complex and tricky statement of philosophy, will amply prove the point. Before all of that, though, I wish to introduce grammar in a way that one never finds done in standard textbooks on the subject. For grammar to make its highest contribution to our general understanding, it needs to be studied not just literally—meaning, to study what its rules do in a sentence—but also philosophically.

The Logic of Grammar

It goes without saying that sentences, whose structure grammar studies, are made up of words. Though these words, in any given language, are infinite in number they could all be classified into eight types. These types of words are called parts of speech consisting of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Everything that one encounters in the study of grammar at its most complex stages, could all be reduced back to these eight pillars. The parts of speech not only define the different functions of these eight kinds of words but they also reveal a lot more about the mind and its perception of the structure of reality. These deep significations need to be studied philosophically, and when done they lead to a greater understanding of the world.

There are three parts of speech without which sentences could not be structured, or be made meaningful. These are nouns, adjectives, and verbs. A noun could be defined as something that either issues out or receives action; it is that which can become a subject or an object of an action. A verb is the action that results out of or falls on a noun. As actions can only be performed by persons, animals, or things, verbs must be connected solely to the noun; in a sentence one can find the verb directly next to the subject-noun or a couple of words apart, depending on the tense of the sentence. The adjective characterises the noun, it tells you how the noun is, it gives you some information regarding the qualities or characteristics of the noun. An adjective is something totally dependent on the noun, its whole existence and *raison d'être* is wholly dependent on that which it qualifies, that which it tells about, or gives forms to. An adjective cannot *subsist* without the noun, while to the noun the adjective is nothing more than extra information, and as such its, the adjective's, existence or non-existence does not greatly alter the meaning-expression of the sentence.

Throughout this whole discussion one shouldn't lose sight of the fact that the only concern of grammar is the *meaning-expression* of its formulations. What finally matters is whether a sentence structure is meaningless or meaningful, how these eight types of words contribute to the meaning-expression of a sentence, and what the most important components of a sentence are whose absence renders the sentence meaningless. Whenever grammar is studied the question should arise as to how this formulation as opposed to that, these placements of words as opposed to those, the removal or addition of these words contribute to the sum of meaning that the sentence strives to express or clarify. Let us take

a sentence as example and see how the principle applies in practice.

Savitri went to the market carrying a blue handbag.

This is an example of a complete sentence, one that doesn't need anything additional to be added to it to complete its meaning. Its meaning is complete because it has all the essential elements placed in the appropriate form, thus creating a sentence structure that expresses meaning. We do not mean to say that one cannot add anything to the sentence. We could, indeed, further elaborate the sentence and say: 'Savitri went to the market carrying a blue handbag, which she purchased from the supermarket' or 'Savitri and Mary went to the market carrying blue handbags' and so on and so forth. One could keep adding meaningfully to the sentence as much as one wants, but these additions do not add to the completion of our original sentence, they do not change it from meaningless to meaningful or from incomplete in meaning to complete in meaning. In the original sentence, the word Savitri, market, and handbag are nouns, the first being the subject or originator of two actions while the other two being the objects or receivers of these actions. Savitri performs the action of going and carrying. She goes to the market and she carries the blue handbag. The actions issue from the subject and they are absorbed back into the objects. One can imagine the verb to be like a shuttle-cock travelling from one racquet to the other, or like the current of electricity passing from one end of the transmission line to the other. The two ends of the transmission line are qualified or characterised by the adjective, while the electric current between the two is qualified by something called the adverb. In our sentence 'blue' is the word that tells us something additional about the handbag. The adjective gives us

the form, shape, nature, character, number, specialty, and so on of the noun. If we remove the adjective our knowledge of the noun reduces, but the sentence is never made meaningless as the adjective never functions as the ground of meaning for the sentence.

Savitri went to the market carrying a handbag.

The sentence is just as complete. Yes, we know a little less about the handbag now. We do not know how it looks, or what colour it possesses but the sentence as a whole doesn't lose its meaning. But what would happen if we were to remove either of the three nouns? Let's see.

Went to the market carrying a blue handbag. (Who?)

Savitri went to the carrying a blue handbag. (Where?)

Savitri went to the market carrying a blue. (What?)

The removal of the noun makes the adjective useless, but the same doesn't happen to the noun when the adjective is removed. The relationship they share could be explained by the concepts of contingency and necessity. The necessary being is the one that depends on none but itself for its being, while the contingent being is that which depends on another, and ultimately on the necessary being, for its being or existence. The noun is a substantive. The adjective on the other hand is an accident, it is something which cannot subsist on its own, and hence is not real in a separate and substantial sense. It is merely something that happens to the noun, not being a *vastu*, entity added on top of the noun, it is but an explication, a characterisation, a formalisation, a qualification of the noun which alone really subsists.

One may question the use of grammar for understanding philosophy, which is what we are going to do with a passage from Aristotle's *Categories*. But one should never forget that a great

deal of philosophy has been arguments over and analyses of grammar. I could take Hume as an example of a modern thinker whose greatest and most impactful contribution to thinking has been a totally grammatical one. He didn't believe in the existence of substances in reality, saying instead that the whole of external reality was nothing but bundles of properties or qualities. A substance could never be experienced without the experience of a quality. Take an apple for instance. Its properties, qualities that the adjective reveals in a sentence, of redness, roundness, edibility, juiciness, and so on are the only things we can experience about it. There is no apple behind the curtain—even if there is, it is irrelevant as it can never be experienced—that *possesses* this bundle of properties, the apple *is* the bundle of properties. In grammatical terms, the nouns are seen as non-existent because they are non-experienced and the adjectives become the only existent, because they are experienced, substantive realities. One doesn't know how the bag is, or whether it even is, behind and beyond the blue-colour that the adjective qualifies it with. Advaita Vedanta goes the other direction. To it the nouns are the only substantives precisely because they are *not* experienced as properties or qualities. That we shall discuss at the end of the essay. One caveat, though, needs to be added here. Philosophy doesn't change the rules of grammar; meaning, if Hume is right we don't start using the adjectives as subjects and objects in the sentence. The rules of grammar are used as aides to our understanding of the world.

From the Categories of Aristotle

Aristotle begins his *Categories* with a discussion of nouns and their qualities. He does something in this discussion which is really involved and takes effort to understand. I will quote here the

most relevant part of the passage and then make use of grammar to understand it better.

Of things there are: (a) some are *said of* a subject but are not *in* any subject. For example, man is said of a subject, the individual man, but is not in any subject. (b) Some are in a subject but are not said of any subject. (By 'in a subject' I mean what is in something, not as a part, and cannot exist separately from what it is in.) For example, the individual knowledge-of-grammar is in a subject, the soul, but is not said of any subject; and the individual white is in a subject, the body (for all colour is in a body), but is not said of any subject. (c) Some are both said of a subject and in a subject. For example, knowledge is in a subject, the soul, and is also said of a subject, knowledge-of-grammar. (d) Some are neither in a subject nor said of a subject, for example, the individual man or individual horse—for nothing of this sort is either in a subject or said of a subject. Things that are individual and numerically one are, without exception, not said of any subject, but there is nothing to prevent some of them from being in a subject—the individual knowledge-of-grammar is one of the things in a subject.¹

Aristotle has come up, thus, with these four different possibilities. (1) A thing could be said to be the subject (the noun) without residing *in* it. His example is 'Socrates *was* a man'. Man does not reside inside Socrates, but rather is Socrates: Socrates = Man. (2) For the second possibility, which goes vice versa, the example would change to 'Socrates *had* knowledge of grammar'. Socrates is not equal to the knowledge of grammar, like he was to man in the first, but this knowledge resides inside Socrates. (3) His own example of the third possibility, where the subject both contains and indeed is the term in question, is 'grammatical knowledge is knowledge'. Knowledge of grammar both contains knowledge inside of it and is itself knowledge.

(4) These are sentences which contain total incompatibles like 'Socrates and Plato'.

On a grammatical level, what is happening is an interplay, in really complex terms, between a noun's possessing an abstract noun and its being spoken of in terms of its subject-complement. To put it simply, what is happening is an interplay between 'is' and 'has' or between 'was' and 'had' according to the tense forms, as one can see clearly by comparing our examples in the first and second instances above. The subject-component is another noun that can replace, like an appositive noun, the subject because it is equal to it, being another, usually more descriptive, name for it. One can notice here that Aristotle is talking about substances, of things, of entities that subsist. We can very easily convert (2) into (1) using the qualifier or adjective and say, 'Socrates *was* knowledgeable'. But then one would be speaking of something that is a modality, a relative form, an accident of the subsisting subject, and not of knowledge as a substantial reality. One finds thus that a grammatical exercise clarifies much of the abstruseness that philosophical speculation can give rise to.

Grammar and Advaita

This takes us to our concluding and most important section of the essay: Advaita and its comprehension through grammar and its logic. Vedanta is the search for truth, and truth can be defined as that which truly is. Its nature is that of necessity and independence. It is that which stands stable in the midst of the continuous becoming that characterises objects in the external world; it is also that which does not require anything other than itself to sustain it, explain it, or bring it into existence but rather is that which sustains, explains, and brings into existence all that there is.

Like Brahman-maya, *satya-mithya*, *ishvara-jiva*, substance-form is among the most important pairs in the philosophical vocabulary of the Advaita Vedanta school. To put it roughly a substance is what in Sanskrit would be called a *vastu*, a thing. Of course, the word substance that forms part of the pair substance-form is much more than that, but the understanding of its elementary and literal meaning forms the first step in the analysis. In fact, all the words of the pairs here mentioned denote each other and are interchangeable, the first term standing for the ultimate reality or God and the second for relative reality or the world.

Let us come back to nouns and adjectives for a moment. And to do so let us take the most famous of Vedantic imageries for their pedagogical value: the clay and the pot. The pot has a certain set of qualities. It has a certain texture, shape, utility, weight, and colour that makes it what it is. All these different modalities could be captured in the word *rupa*, and one set of such distinctive qualities could be given a name, *nama*, to distinguish it from other quality-sets. A table has a distinctive set of qualities that distinguishes it from a bottle, and thus due to being differently formed they are differently named. All the reality that we experience is a panoply of quality-sets, with a corresponding panoply of names. A *nama-rupa* is only a relative and dependent existence for it has no being apart from the being of the thing, *vastu*, whose form or name it is. It is like the adjective, whose function is solely that of characterising the noun, without whose existence the adjective loses its reason for being.

When we talk of a clay pot do we mean to say that the pot is something that exists over and on top of the clay? Is the pot a separate substance that has been placed over the substance called clay? The pot is nothing but a

specific kind of moulding that is given to the clay. The pot doesn't have an existence separate and on top of the clay but rather is the clay, just like in the sentence, 'She was a beautiful girl', the adjective 'beautiful' is not something independent and additional to the girl but rather is the girl. What happens is that the mind superimposes substantiality to something that is accidental. At this point, though, one could raise doubts about the appropriateness of the use of grammar to understand this. 'Girl' and 'beautiful' are indeed noun and adjective respectively but is it appropriate to carry that over to the analogy of the clay and the pot, both of which look like nouns?

Adhyasa, superimposition is to mistake one thing for another thing, to take the rope to be a snake for instance. Is the pot really a noun? On analysis doesn't it turn out rather to be just a formation of clay, which we have mistakenly considered to be a separate and independent substance, a noun with a name of its own? If I were to ask one to hand me a substance, a thing, an object, a *vastu* from this world, something that has its own independent and solid existence, what will be that person's reaction? That person would most probably consider it to be a very simple task, for the world seems to be abounding in objects, and hand me over—to stick to our example—a pot. My response then would be that that person has not handed me an object or substance or noun at all but rather a combination or modification of clay, the name 'pot' being just a label without any separate substance to point to. Thus, from 'clay that is a pot', it becomes nothing more than 'potted clay' like a table would be considered nothing more than 'tabular wood'. On analysis one finds the pot to be but a modification, a mere adjective of the underlying noun or substance. The person then would consider my correction of that person


to be the solution to the problem and hand me over the clay that earlier formed the substance of the form pot.

But in its own turn, is the clay a substance with its own independent existence? Is it not just a particular combination or modification of the molecules that constitute it? Is clay anything but this combination or modification of the underlying molecules? Clay, now, becomes but a name and form of the real substance on which it is dependent: combinations of molecules. What about molecules? Are they anything but a label or name for the underlying atomic formations?² What about atomic formations? Are they anything but names and forms of subatomic elements? This could go on and on to infinity before we are able to catch hold of a single *vastu*, noun, and anything that falls to our hands, on analysis, turns out to be but a form, a name, a qualifier of the underlying substantive, a mirage; in a word, *maya*.

No matter where you look, no matter to what depths of the belly of the atom you dive, anything that has a quality, a form, a structure must, on the demand of logic, be the quality or form or structure of something beneath it that it qualifies, forms, or structures. What then is the base, the root, the core, the noun at the foundation of this piled up infinity of adjectives? The formless, the unqualified, the non-finite. Substance itself, being itself, existence itself, this is at the root of the panoply of forms. In fact, all form is but the form of this formless and undivided substance. But how can that which is essentially formless be given a form? It cannot be.

Form can only be superimposed on the substance, because form is nothing but the substance seen as if another substance were placed on top of it. Here, with this superimposition, duality begins. It is nothing but the pot seen as

though it were something additional and independent of the underlying clay. The whole perceived universe is but this pot falsely construed as a solid substantive over and above, and in addition to, the only substantive there can be: the formless and unformed Brahman. David Hume is essentially right in considering the universe as we experience it to be a collection of bundles of properties but he is essentially wrong in assigning to these properties object-hood or substantiality.³ He is wrong because he is asking for a logical contradiction. He is in essence saying that he will accept a substance only if the substance were to display to him the qualities of a form, that he will accept a substance only if it were a property.

After this long journey in the hard road of knowledge, through the complications of grammar and philosophy, we can in peace go back to the words of our first teacher and say, '*Brahma satyam, jagat mithya*'; Brahman is true, the universe is false'. 

Notes and References

1. *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, trans. J L Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), Chapter 2; 4.
2. One should ask oneself if water is anything but a label, *nama*, for two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom combined in a particular formation.
3. The clearest statement of David Hume's theory of substance is here: 'The idea, of substance must therefore be derived from an impression of reflection, if it really exists. But the impressions of reflection resolve themselves into our passions and emotions: none of which can possibly represent a substance. We have therefore no idea of substance, distinct from that of a collection of particular qualities, nor have we any other meaning when we either talk or reason concerning it.' (David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, Part I, Section 6).



Education, Yoga, and Bhagavadgita

A P N Pankaj

Narada and Sanatkumara

SAGE NARADA is one of the most well-known and illustrious sages in the Indian spiritual and religious tradition. Besides being a colourful, if sometimes controversial, personality, he is a great teacher, especially of the Bhagavata dharma. The name Narada means 'one who imparts knowledge of the Supreme Self: *naram paramatmavishayam jnanam dadati*.' From the Upanishads to Puranas, from epics to classics, from *dharmashastras*¹ to Bhakti literature, namely, *Narada Pancaratra* and Bhakti Sutras et al, his name recurrently appears in Hindu literature, including that in some of the modern Indian languages. 'Among the divine sages,' says Sri Krishna, 'I am Narada.'² His life story has been given in detail in several Puranas, including the Bhagavata.³

This Narada, says the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, one of the most important ancient Upanishads, once went to the sage Sanatkumara to unburden the agony of his soul. Sanatkumara is another great sage and one of the seniormost ones in the hierarchy of Hindu seers. Both Narada and Sanatkumara are the *manasa-putras*, mind-born sons of Brahma, Sanatkumara being one among the four child-seers opting to remain children of five years eternally.⁴

Narada, we learn from the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, requested Sanatkumara to teach him.⁵ The latter asked him to first tell him what he already knew whereafter he would teach him further. Narada furnished a long list of arts and sciences, more than a score of them, that he had mastered.⁶ 'But,' says Narada, 'I am like

one knowing the words and not a knower of the Self. Venerable Sir, it has been heard by me from those like you that he who knows the Self crosses over sorrow: *tarati shokam-atmavit*, and I am one, sorrowing, *shochami*. Please help me cross over to the other side of sorrow: *tam mam shokasya param tarayatu*.' Sanatkumara then told that Narada what the latter had indeed learnt was only a name.

'Mental Slums: More Dangerous than Material Slums'

The word *shoka*, sorrow or grief, appears in the above story more than once. We shall return to this word a little later. What follows in this story is the knowledge of the Self imparted step-by-step by Sanatkumara to Narada. The chapter passing through twenty-five sections, concludes in the twenty-sixth by emphasising that to such a student whose stains have been wiped away, the venerable Sanatkumara shows the other shore of darkness, the realm of light: '*Tasmai mriditakashayaya tamasah param darshayati bhagavan sanatkumarah*'.⁷

From this, a story thousands of years old, we come to the nineteen-fifties. Two speeches of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who was then Vice-President of India and later the President, draw our attention to an important aspect of our national life. Dr Radhakrishnan, it needs hardly be reminded, was a great educationist, whose birthday is celebrated as the Teachers' Day. He says:

There is no point in our bringing about material rehabilitation, having large dams etc., if the men we turn out are small and petty-minded. Unless the men themselves become large-hearted, vigorous in intellect and refined in their minds, they will not be able to utilise all the conveniences and comforts which we are placing at their disposal. What's the good of bringing about a change in the environment if we do not bring about a change in mind? We must change ourselves and if we have to change ourselves,

we have to start the process in the institutions which cater to the needs of the students.⁸

Within four months of the above speech, Dr Radhakrishnan said: 'The aim of education is not merely to liberate the intellect but also to free the heart and conscience. Mental slums are more dangerous than material slums.'⁹

We may now return to the Upanishadic phrase, '*mriditakashayaya tamasah param darshayati*' and connect it to Dr Radhakrishnan's reference to the mental slums. Only after the student's mind and intellect and conscience are cleared of the squalor and stains and *shoka* is wiped away, can the student enter the realm of luminosity. And that is what, according to the *Katha Upanishad*, education aims at achieving: '*tejasvinavadhitamastu*, may our learning illumine us'.¹⁰

Shoka: A Key Term in Bhagavadgita

In the Gita also, the word *shoka* is one of the key terms and the essential objective of the Gita is to eradicate *shoka*.

Sri Krishna is a world-teacher, *jagadguru*: *krishnam vande jagadgurum*. The message of the Gita is meant to awaken, instruct, and enlighten Partha Arjuna, *parthaya pratibodhitam*,¹¹ who is steeped in the depth of sorrow, *shokasamvignamanasah* (1.47). He is physically debilitated, mentally torpid, and intellectually stricken with indecision (1.28–30). Standing between the two opposing forces, *senayorubhayormadhye* (1.21), the proverbial forces of *shreya* and *preya*: the good and the pleasant, in the field of action: *kurukshetra*, he cannot decide as to the course he should follow. And he seeks refuge in the Master, saying: 'My natural traits are stricken by imbecility and a sense of sin. My conscience has become numb regarding my duty. I ask you to tell me that which is definitely good, *Shreya*, for me. I am your disciple, *shishyaste'ham*, teach me,

shadhi mam. I have taken refuge in you, *tvam prapannam*' (2.7).

And how does Arjuna's education begin? The compassionate Master wants to smile at the precarious situation in which he finds this *shishya*, but stops short. Vyasa, the compiler of the Gita, *vyasena grathita* (Invocation), uses a pithy term: '*prahasanniva*, smiling as it were' (2.10). The teacher feels like smiling at the irony of the moment but doesn't. With fallacious logic, the student tries to cover his cowardice and convince the teacher about his intent against bloodshed of his kith and kin, and the teacher wants to laugh. Yet, the physical, mental, and emotional crises in which he finds the student rouses his compassion. But then this is not the moment of giving lollipops. In no uncertain terms, he chides the student, 'you grieve where no grief should be and yet speak the words of the wise' (2.11).

And then the teacher says, '*na tvam shochitu-marhasi*' (2.25-7). If this is the beginning of the teaching, then the end verily is the same: '*ma shuchah*, do not grieve.' He invites the student to his refuge: '*Mamekam sharanam vraja*; take refuge in me alone' (18.66). This *mam* is the self of the supreme soul residing in the heart of all beings.

With these words of the Master, the wavering, vacillating, and woebegone student rises up. His *shoka* gone, he says that his delusion had been dispelled, he had regained his memory, and now stood to follow the advice of the Master (18.73).

That is what education is all about: it wipes away the stains of *shoka*, clears mental slums, revives confidence, and revitalises the potential innate to every individual.

Four Adjectives of the Gita

Four adjectives, in the colophon of every chapter, have been assigned to the Gita: (1) It is Upanishad; *gitasu upanishatsu*. The word Upanishad means 'the knowledge derived by sitting close to

the preceptor and listening attentively to him'. (2) The process followed is dialogue: *shrikrishnarjuna-samvade*. The student asks in a spirit of learning: *pariprashnena*, supplementaries and complementaries, and the teacher answers until the doubts are erased. (3) Then the Gita is *brahma-vidya*, the science of the supreme Reality, and (4) it is *yogashastra*, the art of union with that Reality. In other words, Gita is a school of education where the truths of spirit can be apprehended by those who prepare themselves for their reception by vigorous discipline.

The term *yoga* has been derived from the root *yuj*, which means to bind together. Yoga means binding one's psychic powers, balancing them, and improving upon them. 'By yoking together and harnessing our energies by the most intense concentration of personality, we force the passage from the narrow ego to the transcendent personality.'¹²

Three Types of Courses

Three types of courses are offered by the teacher of the Gita yoga. (i) Yoga of knowledge: *jnana yoga* (ii) Yoga of devotion: *bhakti yoga*, and (iii) Yoga of action: *karma yoga*. While each of these eventually lead to the same destination, the realisation of the supreme Truth, they are also interdependent. Since, however, there are men of different aptitudes and inclinations, reflective, emotional, or active, there is a distribution of emphasis on the theoretical, emotional, or practical. At the end, knowledge, love, and action mingle together and exclusivity vanishes. As was said about Swami Vivekananda by Sister Nivedita, 'the workshop, the study, the farmyard, and the field are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple.'¹³ Karma becomes *yajna*, sacrifice, and leads to God when consecrated to the universal good. In *bhakti*, intense love for God

in its highest form, *parama premarupa*,¹⁴ without mundane motive or consideration, a devotee sees his chosen personal God in every particle of the universe: *yo mam pashyati sarvatra*.¹⁵ And jnana, knowledge, in its purest, transcendental form is the experience of and identification with the spiritual vision. Thus differences melt into the flow of the central reality, *vishvarupa*, the cosmic form.¹⁶

And yoga, the discipline to which we referred earlier, is essential whichever path we opt. The evanescent mind needs to be controlled. The turbulent senses lead the mind astray.¹⁷ In an answer to one of Arjuna's questions while Sri Krishna admits that the mind is fickle and turbulent, 'it can', he says, 'be tamed by *abhyasa* and *vairagya*, practice and dispassion'. In an interesting, contextual definition of *vairagya*, Swamiji says that it is a state in which one's faculties are focussed on a specific object by dissociating the mind from all other objects; in other words, one-pointed concentration. And that precisely is the *abhyasa*, practice, yoga aims at. '*Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah*; thoughts are controlled by practice and dispassion',¹⁸ says Patanjali also while defining yoga as '*chittavrittinirodhah*; the cessation of thoughts' (1.2).

Equanimity and Skill

Sri Krishna advises Arjuna to establish himself in yoga and engage in action: *yogasthab kuru karmani*,¹⁹ and translate yoga as equanimity, *samatvam*, and skill in action, *karmasu kaushalam* (2.50). While one-pointed, focussed, concentration is necessary to master a skill, it is equally important for the learner to be equanimous, calm of temper. Learning requires patience and perseverance. There are difficult, even testing times, as in case of Arjuna in Kurukshetra, and unless the student is prepared to bear with those difficulties, he is bound to miss the insights that often

come the hard way. *Kaushala*, which we generally translate as skill, literally means expertise. And expertise in any field demands the mind of a yogi. Patanjali calls it *dharana*,²⁰ being focussed.

Gita and the Yoga Sutras

The Gita does not invariably or necessarily refer to yoga in the same manner as Patanjali does. As we have noted earlier, the Gita uses the word in many contexts and senses. It also speaks of *yoga-yajnas*, those who sacrifice through yoga and while elaborating them also refers to *pranayama*.²¹ It explains *asana*, posture, in some detail (6.11-4) and reiterates concentration of the mind in the next verse, simultaneously emphasising moderation (6.15-7). Patanjali advocates a firm but relaxed *asana* and cautions against a wrong posture.²² Certainly, however, neither the Gita nor Patanjali speak about the various physical exercises under the banner of *asana*.

Samadhi: Superconscious Perception

One feature of Patanjali which is strikingly close to the Gita is his approach to *samadhi*. The Gita defines *samadhi* as 'that state of mind or intellect where it remains undisturbed and is stable'. That state is, Sri Krishna says, 'when one attains yoga'.²³ According to Patanjali, in *samadhi*, 'the true nature of the object shines forth, not distorted by the mind of the perceiver'.²⁴

To further explain the above two definitions, we may refer to the following comments, first by Dr Radhakrishnan on the Gita and the next by Swami Prabhavananda, on Patanjali.


Radhakrishnan says that *samadhi* 'is not less of consciousness but the highest kind of consciousness. The object with which the mind is in communion is the Divine Self'.²⁵ Swami Prabhavananda explains,

Ordinary sense-perception is distorted and coloured by the imagination of the perceiver.

We decide in advance what it is we think we are going to see, and this perception interferes with our vision ... It is only in the supersensuous perception of samadhi that we see an object in the truth of its own nature, absolutely free from the distortions of our imagination. Samadhi is ... direct knowledge. When Sri Ramakrishna told Vivekananda, "I see God more real than I see you", he was speaking the literal truth. For Ramakrishna meant that he saw God in Samadhi, while he saw Vivekananda with the eyes of his ordinary sense-perception which must necessarily retain a measure of distortion.²⁶

That is what the Gita also calls the *brahmi sthithi*, an established spiritual state.²⁷

A Yogi is Above All

The Gita lays great emphasis on yoga through its various approaches and Sri Krishna says that Arjuna must become a yogi. 'The yogi is greater than the ascetic, greater than the man of knowledge and greater than the man of action' and adds that the one who, in full faith in God, worships him is the most proficient in yoga (6.46–7). 

Notes and References

1. The authorship of *Naradasmr̥iti* is attributed to Sage Narada.
2. Bhagavadgita, 10.26.
3. See Bhagavata, 1.5.6.
4. The other three are: Sanaka, Sanandana, and Sanatana.
5. See *Chhandogya Upanishad*, 7.1.
6. See Dr S Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upanishads* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953), 468: 'The learned Narada goes to the unlearned Sanatkumar for instruction. For self-realisation, practice of virtue and love to all creation are necessary more than scriptural lore. *Vamana Purana* makes out that Sanatkumar is the son of virtue by the wife of non-violence.'
7. *Chhandogya Upanishad*, 7.26.2.
8. Dr S Radhakrishnan, 'Convocation Address, Gujarat University, 8 October 1955', *Occasional Speeches and Writings-I* (October 1952–January 1956) (New Delhi: Government of India, 1956), 170–1.
9. 'Hitakarini Sabha, Jabalpur, Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, Inaugural Address, 22 January 1956', *Occasional Speeches and Writings-I*, 366.
10. *Katha Upanishad*, Invocation.
11. Gita, Invocation, 1.
12. The term yoga is used in different senses (i) 'Yujyate etad iti yogah; yoga is the concentrated thought.' (ii) 'Yujyate anena iti yogah; yoga is the method which joins, unites, or binds.' (iii) 'Yujyate tasminniti yogah; yoga is the place where the concentrated thought is produced.' See Dr S Radhakrishnan, *Bhagavadgita*, 'Introductory Essay', Footnote. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958), 50.
13. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 9 vols (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1–8, 1989; 9, 1997), 1.xv.
14. Narada, *Bhakti Sutra*, 2.
15. Gita, 6.30.
16. 'Yatha nadinam bahavo'mbuvegah, samudramevabhimukha dravanti; as the many waves of the rivers flow into the ocean, so do all these great warriors enter blazing into your mouths' (Gita, 11.28); Compare with: 'Saritajala jalani-dhi mahu jai hoi achala jimi jiva hari pai; the water of the stream, becomes still once it pours into the ocean, just as the ego finds eternal rest on attaining union with Sri Hari' (*Ramacharitamana*, 4.13.4).
17. Gita, 2.60.
18. Patanjali, *Yoga Sutra*, 1.12.
19. Gita, 2.48.
20. Patanjali, *Yoga Sutra*, 3.1.
21. Gita, 4.28–9.
22. Patanjali, *Yoga Sutra*, 2.46–7; These are only a few examples. Comparative study between the yoga of Gita and of Patanjali is a different subject in its own right.
23. Gita, 2.53.
24. Patanjali, *Yoga Sutra*, 3.3.
25. Radhakrishnan, *Bhagavadgita* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), 122.
26. Swami Prabhavananda, *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* (Chennai: Ramakrishna Math, 2004), 113–4.
27. Gita, 2.72.



Thou Art Never Alone

Swami Pavitrananda

Thou hast made me known to friends
whom I knew not.
Thou hast given me seats in homes
not my own;
Thou hast brought the distant near,
And made a brother of the stranger.
I am uneasy at heart when I have to leave
my accustomed shelter;
I forget that there abides the old in the new,
And that there also thou abidest.
Through birth and death,
in this world or in others,
Wherever thou leadest me, it is thou, the same,
The one companion of my endless life,
Who ever linkest my heart with bonds of joy
to the unfamiliar.
When one knows thee,
then alien there is none;
Then no door is shut. Oh, grant me my prayer,
That I may never lose
the bliss of the touch of the One
In the play of the many.¹

I REMEMBER AN INCIDENT which happened about twenty-five years ago, with one of our elderly swamis, whom you would respect very much. We would take the liberty to argue and talk with him very freely, and he would be very

affectionate with us. Sometimes he would make fun with us, fun of a very high order. Once he began to ask each one of us, whenever we went to him, 'Suppose, all of a sudden, you find yourself alone in the world, and there is not another human being in the vast universe. You have all the food, everything that is necessary for you, but there is not a single human being other than you. What would you do?'

This question would create excitement, and much argument and discussion. Some would say, 'Well, I'd begin to meditate; I would spend my time in meditation'. But one cannot meditate that way. So various monks would give various suggestions as to what he would do. But strangely enough, it did not occur to us that we can never be alone; we did not give him that reply. Perhaps it was taken for granted that you could give the reply, and at once could silence him. You cannot say that we shall ever find ourselves alone.

In history and literature, we find cases of persons who suddenly found themselves alone. In literature it might simply be imagination, but still there is semblance of truth. We can picture

what the effect would be to find ourselves alone. In a poem of William Cowper, Alexander Selkirk found himself alone on an island near the Pacific coast of South America. What did he feel? That is put in a very interesting way.

At first he was happy.

I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea

But then comes the reaction.

Society, Friendship, and Love
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
O, had I the wings of a dove
How soon would I taste you again!

And he says:

O Solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?

Yes, sages seek solitude. But we also feel that life is full of distractions, and we say, 'Let us go to a solitary place'. But when we are in solitude we say, 'Solitude, where are the charms that sages have seen in thy face?' And so Cowper says:

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone.²

Such a pathetic thing.

We find another case in the story of Robinson Crusoe. Robinson Crusoe, all of a sudden, after a shipwreck, finds himself on an island where there is no other human being. But fortunately he has the courage to face the situation: how to get the ship which was wrecked to come near the coast, and how to build up his life, how to have cultivation, and so on.³ We find an allegory behind it. Many persons find themselves in a shipwreck of their life, as it were, frustrated, their hopes gone and love betrayed. What could be a worse shipwreck than that? It is because they build their life on false hopes, on things which have no value, that they find their life shipwrecked. But if one is courageous enough, bold enough, he can rebuild his life on things which have greater value.

It is not only when we are in isolation, stranded on an island without any human companions, that we find ourselves lonely. There are many cases where one feels lonely amidst a crowd. There are some persons, men of affairs, who always have to live in a crowd, but inwardly, some of them, at one time or other, feel so much alone. It is said that the greater the responsibility, the greater the loneliness. If one is at the top, he finds his life lonely at times, since he has to make decisions which are his own responsibility, and which he cannot share with others. Even if he consults others, the final decision is his, and so he finds himself lonely. He must find something which can sustain him. Otherwise, he will break down; otherwise, he will find his life miserable.

An English general gave a broadcast some time ago, over the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), and he said: 'From my own experience, I know the loneliness of a military officer when he rises to the top. There is great responsibility on him, and he cannot share his secrets with others; he has to bear the burden alone. There might be a great disaster, or there might be victory, but all the responsibility is his own. He cannot share the secret with others.'

In that broadcast he gave a vivid description of General Eisenhower, when he was the supreme commander of the Allied forces. According to plan, the soldiers will land on the Normandy beach on the fourth of June, 1944. But the weather forecast was very bad, and it will be risky. On the fifth of June, the weather will be clearer, but only for thirty-six hours. He could land only a limited number of soldiers, but they might be isolated if they cannot land all the soldiers. But still he had to take the risk and because they were English and American soldiers, the responsibility was much greater. He could not share the secret with others, and it is said that he wrote in his own handwriting: 'I am doing these

things; all responsibility is mine, and nobody else should be blamed.' Think of his tremendous loneliness, and the suspense and anxiety.

And so it is said that the greater the responsibility, the greater the loneliness. For, with one decision, a lot of harm may be done, or a lot of good may be done. You have to take the risk. And if you have to take the risk, usually, if you are to remain calm, there must be a philosophy which will sustain you. It might be your faith in God.

I read about a general. He would pray intensely before making any decision. I know of a High Court judge who would pray for a much longer time, his son told me, in the morning of that day on which he was to give capital punishment. He would worship for a long time. He had to give capital punishment, for truth, but who knows he was not making a mistake. This is the great loneliness. But that loneliness can be diminished, can be made less oppressive, if there is some safety valve, if there is devotion, or if one can think that he acts simply for love of truth, the truth as he understands it. Or, he may say, 'I will take the responsibility, but without caring for the results. As far as I know it to be right, I will follow it.'

Prime Minister [of erstwhile India] Jawaharlal Nehru, was once asked, because he was a follower of Gandhi: 'What is the philosophy of your life?'

He said: 'The result does not worry me so long as I know the cause is right. I do not think in terms of the future; I take care of the present.'

Of course, you will have to make plans, but if you think too much of the future, then you will have more worries and anxieties. Find out what is right, and follow that, but there must be a philosophy. The Bhagavadgita's attitude is: Don't think in terms of the result; think in terms of right action.

So, there is the loneliness of persons who are always in the crowd. There is another kind of loneliness when an idealist finds himself alone. He wants to live for some ideal; he wants to

spend all his energy in the pursuit of that ideal, and when you pursue some ideal, it may not tally with popular beliefs.

Swami Vivekananda used to say the majority opinion is not always right. The world has been built up by those who have rejected the opinion of the majority, and found a new path. These are persons who had some ideal, who had a vision which they could not convince others to be right. But still they had to follow that inner light, though they stood alone in the world. Even surrounded by intimate friends and relations, they would feel lonely, for they have seen some light which others do not see. They have to go on the journey of life alone.

There was a Bengali poem written by Rabin-dranath Tagore, at the time when the revolutionary movement started in Bengal in 1905, about a young man who faced that trouble. It was a political thing, written under the spur of political excitement, but it is true everywhere. The poem says:

If at thy call nobody responds,
Go alone, go alone, thyself.
It might be people will avoid thy company:
It might be people will shun you like a plague.
But go on thyself, alone, go thou alone.
It might be thyself surrounded by darkness on
a stormy night;
It might be no one will hold up a candle to
light thy path.
But go on my soul, thyself, alone, and alone.
It might be in the forest of life,
You will find while walking,
thy feet are bleeding;
You will have to go through a stormy path.
But it does not matter, thyself.
Go, go thou alone. Go thou alone.⁴

Yes, that is the situation one finds oneself in when one pursues an ideal. Perhaps it was with reference to that that Christ said: 'Thy foes shall be of thine own household.'⁵ For the greatest obstruction, the greatest obstacle, comes from your intimate friends, your relations, your family members.

It is because you do not follow the routine way of life, because you are lured by some ideal.

And so Christ said: 'I have come to set the father against the son, the son against the father, the daughter against the mother, and the mother against the daughter' (10:35). You see, when you follow a particular ideal, your ideal may not be the ideal of others. It might be you are seized by a vision which others do not see, but that does not matter because it is your ideal, your vision. You feel that you will have to follow it. What can you do? You cannot but follow that, because it is your vision. Then, if you do not find any other person, if no one responds to your call, it does not matter. 'Go thou alone, go thou alone, my soul.' That is the position one finds oneself in.

We do not feel lonely only while we are alone in an isolated place. We may also feel lonely in a crowd. That is the worst type of loneliness, when we find ourselves against the whole world. Usually, those who are in ordinary circumstances, who are not lured by such ideals, people who are loving and affectionate, they never find themselves alone. Wherever they go, even if they do not talk, they find themselves in friendly surroundings where they never feel lonely. But those who are self-centred, those who have resentment, those who have hatred, those who are cynical, they find themselves alone, always. It is said that love expands and hatred contracts. When one is self-centred, when one finds himself always right and others wrong, one finds himself alone, in miserable isolation wherever he goes. But that is not the case, even in hostile surroundings, with a person of serene temperament who has great sympathy for all, a great amount of love and affection for one and all. Even those persons who are in the wrong, even those persons who are in distress, he always has sympathy for one and all. Such a person, naturally, will never find himself lonely, wherever he goes. He

will always be in company, even if he does not talk with others. A kind word or a smiling face always brings him in touch with others.

There is another kind of loneliness, the loneliness of a guilty mind. When one does something wrong, his mind is so guilty that he feels lonely, and he finds himself separated from man and God. The guilty conscience gives a great and miserable isolation, but when the conscience is clear, everyone finds that he has no enemy; everyone finds that he is in God's good world.

That is what happens with dictators, military dictators. With their power, they do many crimes; out of their vaulting ambition, they want to rule the whole universe. But many of them had a miserable death. Hitler found himself so lonely during his last days, as we find in the report. He acted in such a way that afterwards we find he was a minority of one, in miserable isolation. His conscience was not clear.

But loneliness is not always bad, and many good things have come out of great loneliness. There are some cases, I know, who, when they were put into prison brought out many good books, important books. In India, there was a political leader, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was a great scholar. He was put into jail without trial, and was kept there for six or seven years. He had a splendid memory, and in the jail he wrote a good, modern commentary on the Gita.⁶ He finds against all other commentaries that the main stress in the Gita is action, that it is a gospel of action. When I read the book, I wondered how could he do it; there were so many references. Of course, he may have checked those references afterwards, but he wrote them in the jail. So it was a blessing in disguise that he was put into jail; had he been outside, perhaps, he would not have been able to write such a beautiful commentary on the Gita.

This was also true of Sri Aurobindo. When he was put into jail, his mind went to the deeper

problems of life; when he came out of jail, he left his political activities and went into solitude, and while there he had to fall back upon himself. There have been saints made out of loneliness.

It was true of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. He was of a military temperament in his early days, and he took part in battle. But he became lame and was in the hospital, and even after that he was supposed to rest quietly alone. He began to think and think. Then, his mind turned from military activities to spiritual activities, and afterwards he became a saint.

It is the same with Saint Teresa. She was sick for a long time in her early days; she thought deeply of spiritual problems, and her life took a different direction. So it is good, sometimes, that you are forced to be lonely. When you are lonely, when the outside world has no meaning for you, when you are forcibly shut out from the outside world, your mind has to back upon itself. Then you know what you really are; then an inner world opens up for you. It might be difficult for some to face that inner world, for in the beginning one is not practised, one does not know how to face it. Yes, there have been disastrous effects of living in solitude, but it has good points also. Then you see what is within yourself, when the inner world opens. The outer world is not everything; there is a vaster world within, if you can only get access to it.

The psychologists will usually say that people want to be very busy because they want to escape from themselves. They cannot face themselves, and because of that there are many makeshift activities. If you have no other activity, and you have leisure enough and money enough, you may go on mountain expeditions and conquer Mt Everest. But even if you can conquer Mt Everest, what will that do for your inner life? You have not conquered yourself. You are simply going outside in feverish activity. There are good things

in that, also; I do not minimise that. But, from another standpoint, what is the value of that? You simply go about in the outer world, but thereby you do not get peace. You do not get anything substantial, anything real.

So, there comes a time when you feel frustrated, when you feel that the whole world has cheated you, that your whole life has been deceived. Your whole life has been on the wrong scent, and towards the end you feel that it has been a mistake. But that does not happen if you find something within your inner world, if you know yourself. What is there within the inner world? Sooner or later, willy-nilly, we have to face that world. The sooner we face it the better, or there will come some occasion when we are forced to be lonely by sickness or bereavement.

Bereavement also brings you loneliness. When there is a great bereavement, you feel the whole world has cheated you, that even God has cheated you, as it were. Why should he take away such a good relative of mine? Why should God take away this little child? You feel the whole world has become your enemy; you feel you are in hostile surroundings. You are lonely, terribly lonely, and no one can sympathise with you sufficiently. That does not happen if you are prepared beforehand, if you find out what is within yourself.

Gradually, then, we find what we really are, that there is a higher being within us. We are not what we seem to be; there is something higher within us that is ever existent, that is always with us, that never wears out. Sometimes familiarity breeds contempt, and lifelong friends, because of some incident, may become lifelong enemies. But that higher being, if you find that within yourself, that will never wear out; that will be ever new. If one finds that, as the poem says, wherever you go, the old is there. Amidst the new things, amidst the new surroundings, the old truth is there, the old entity is there, to carry

with you. You may call it God, you may call it higher being, you may call it your higher self, but in any case, there is something within, if you can only reach that. We are never alone.

The Gita says: 'One, as a result of illumination or enlightenment, finds joy in oneself, finds peace in oneself. He has not to work for anything; he has no need for anything else. He has no ambition in life; he has no desire in life, for he is Self-satisfied.'⁷ It is Self-satisfaction, not self-centredness; he has found out his higher reality, which we are searching. So, when one has reached that condition, when one has known oneself, his real Self, when one has that knowledge, he does not care for anything else, nor has he need for anything else. His peace is undisturbed; his joy is unabated. It is possible to reach that position, to get that consciousness.

So, it is said that when you have known God you can never be alone. Christ said these famous words to his disciples: 'Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; *and yet I am not alone, because the father is with me.*'⁸ When a person has known the Truth, he will say: 'I shall never be alone. God will be with me.' These are the persons who remain undaunted by any circumstances; they can follow the light of their inner Self because they have known Truth. When they have known Truth, they know that Truth will always abide with them. They have seen God; they have known God, and therefore they can never be alone. Whatever the circumstances they are in, whatever surroundings they are thrown in, they know they are safe; they know they are under the protecting hand of One who is ever vigilant, who sees everything, as the sun which is overhead sees everything which is below. When one knows he is under the protection of such a being, he can never feel lonely.

Sri Ramakrishna was very fond of one song.

He would sing, 'My mind, always remain within yourself. Don't seek any external help. Within your heart is embedded that philosopher's stone which by its touch will turn everything into gold. My mind, seek that philosopher's stone within yourself. Don't seek any external help.'⁹

So long as you depend for your happiness on any other person or any circumstances, you will be miserable, because you do not know when circumstances will change. You do not know when men will find that it is difficult to help you. So long as your peace of mind or your joy depends on men or circumstances, you are on insecure ground. But when you have found the source of all joy, the source of all strength within yourself, you are secure. That is called real independence; that is called real freedom; that is called liberation, freedom from bondage. Till you reach that state, you are under constant slavery, conscious or unconscious.

One of the Upanishads says: 'Only then will you become fearless, when you have known your union with the Godhead. If you find you are separate from God, even for the slightest moment, fear will seize you, fear will come to you.'¹⁰ But that fearlessness will not come merely from intellectual knowledge. It must be realisation. So we find that even the pandits and scholarly persons are in no way different from ordinary persons. They talk high things, they may speak of highly philosophical things, but those philosophical truths have not become part and parcel of their being; they have not known that truth from their experience. 'The moment you feel yourself separate from God, fear will seize you.' When you can always remember God, when you can feel your relationship with God, but not simply by an effort, when it becomes spontaneous, natural, then you will be fearless, then only will you always be in good company and never feel that you are alone.

An Indian saint of the seventeenth century wrote a hymn in which he says:

Holding my hand, thou leadest me,
My comrade everywhere.
As I go on and lean on thee.
My burden thou dost bear. ...
So, like a happy child I play
In thy dear world, O God,
And everywhere—I, Tuka, say—
Thy bliss is spread abroad.¹¹

When one has realisation, one can say that, ‘Holding my hand, thou leadest me, my comrade.’ It is not only in particular circumstances, not only when you pray; it becomes constant, unceasing prayer, meditation or companionship with God. That is the final realisation. It is not annihilation; it is fulfilment, the fulfilment of your life, when you have known your identity with God, your union with God. Only in that state can you feel secure, in a bliss that will never abate, a bliss, a joy that will remain the same in spite of all seeming difficulties.

A saint said: ‘God is a living reality, if only you can know it.’ Because he realised it, he could speak that way. God is a living reality, not a vague aspiration.

Another saint spoke in a similar way: ‘God is always with you to protect you, but because you do not recognise that you feel you are alone, you feel you are insecure.’ If God is with us, what can we fear? What are the circumstances which can frighten us? It is a fact that God is there, for all saints say that, but even with all our spiritual effort, we cannot be fully secure until we realise that. But still it is true.

Another saint says: ‘When once you can realise that God is your own, and you have a very close, unbreakable relationship with God, then you will be free from fear, and will never feel that you are alone. God is always there.’

These things might simply seem to be poetry, a breath of air. But this is the state which

religious persons are struggling to reach, and that state can be reached when you know from the experience of all saints that it is a reality. There is hope for us; we know that the Truth is there. We know that there is that undiscovered land to which we can all go, if we struggle sufficiently, if we struggle sincerely and earnestly. That land belongs to all of us, that undiscovered land where you find that all fear is gone, all sense of insecurity is gone. Then we are in a place where we find that ‘Thy bliss, O God, is spread abroad’.

May he protect us;
May he guide us;
May he give us right understanding and strength;
May we be able to realise the goal of life. ❧

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Meditation on the Upanishads

Swami Shraddhananda

(Continued from the previous issue)

WE HAVE TO concentrate our mind on another experience that is all the time with us. We are so foolish, that we do not pay any attention to it—namely, existence. We have negated all the five walls, so what am ‘I’? ‘I’ am experiencing existence all the time, but it is always the names and forms. So forget the names and forms and think of existence only. The tree is here, a house is there, the ground is underneath our feet, and everything is okay. Forget all these things and only think of the existence. Forget the heartbeat and only think of existence. The tragedy is that we are mixing up names and forms. Onto this white, wonderful, blank paper of Brahman, we are projecting all these names and forms. We are just

like the child who gets into mother’s stationery and begins to make lines and scribbles onto that blank sheet of paper.

Think of the vast universe and the meanings of pieces of existence. Practise this contemplation. In the beginning, this concentration is necessary. Whatever form is coming through our mind, we must negate it, and then maybe one day—for just two seconds—that glimpse of the true Self will appear. After the five sheaths have been negated, do not think that there is just a vacuum. No. *Asti*, is-ness or being, is there. All of the time we experience this existence. That is what is giving us the experience of joy. Try to concentrate on *asti*, existence and the state of being.

This existence or reality has three faces. We know of the first person, second person, and third person in grammar. The third person is remote; the second person has come closer and says, 'You will do this. You are beautiful.' The existence is there, but the existence is closer. If we try to think of our current American president, we have to stretch our minds a bit, but closer than anything is 'I am'. We come to the first person and nobody can tell us, 'You are not'. All the time we experience our existence. We need to try to concentrate within and try to feel our own existence. Forget all the names and forms and do not be terrified. Do not think that we will fall into the Grand Canyon. One day we will feel overwhelmed and declare, 'Here I am! This is my true home'. If you can effectively negate the names and forms by saying, 'I am not this, I am not that', then you will have a glimpse of the Self as *asmi*, 'I am'. '*Tat tvam asi*' means thou art that.

When we have that glimpse of the Self, then we know we have nothing to lose. Existence is timeless. That experience will remain. This experience is the most intimate experience of life. Even the most ignorant person is living with that experience all the time. Although that person will say, 'I am dying, I am dying'. Really one cannot die because this experience is immortal. That intuition of existence, of immortal existence, has to be brought up from deep within. We have to find it. We are that all the time. That experience has to be brought to the surface. From our text: '*He alone who knows Brahman as existent truly lives*.' Surely at death a foolish person does not attain Brahman, but only a wise person.

If Brahman is real, then what is this world of names and forms? That one infinite being became this many: 'Desiring that he should become many, that he should make of himself

many forms, Brahman meditated. Meditating, he created all things.'¹¹

It is like trying to explain things to a child when a spiritual seeker tries to find answers to questions like, 'Who made God?' These questions are childish. The real truth of God is indescribable. If we are really ready, if we are really strong, then stick to the real truth. If not, then just talk about God: '*Creating all things, he entered into everything*' (ibid.). We should know that finally, there is nothing but Brahman. The most important thing in this chapter is not to describe creation, but that we learn that Brahman has entered into everything.

Class 11: Krama Mukti

Krama mukti, gradual liberation, is where the desire to be kind and good can prevent our liberation. The goal of Self-knowledge is to reach the highest freedom. Thus, we have to rise above all duality, even the concept of God. When we say God, we think of *saguna* Brahman, Brahman with form. If we want Self-knowledge we have to have absolute dispassion for both good and evil. Our own body has many parts and each part might be a friend or an enemy, because where there is duality there is fear. Go above and beyond fear by dissolving everything. We are infinite consciousness, infinite bliss, and that is our true Self. Everything will then be a part of us.

Normally we feel a unity in our body, but if the body gets sick, then we become afraid. We have to know that the body is just an idea. It may be solid matter, but mind is behind it just the same. Every dream seems real, but it is made up of mind. Spiritual practice and discipline in the beginning are terrible struggles. We have to do many unpleasant and austere things, but the reward is tremendous. The more we discover our own spiritual nature, the more vistas

of joy will become visible to us. When we pursue our spiritual practice we think that our life will be dry, but no. It becomes sweet, sweeter, and sweeter—calm, contented, joyful, and tranquil. We must have patience and courage. Our peace, joy, and tranquillity are always dependent on infinite trivia. This world is called *maya* because it is not steady.

In Vedantic practice we must read the Vedantic news with Vedantic glasses. If we throw out our professor's instructions, we cannot progress. This is also true of our spiritual instructions. Righteousness and truth raise the character. The character becomes grounded in these sublime qualities. Absorption of these truths is a subliminal spiritual power.

Self-knowledge is not something that has to be imported from heaven. The Self is always here. By analysing the attachments that are binding us, the more we will be free from them. If we know the nature of things, then we will not be attached. The more we renounce, the more fullness of Self we will have.

When we were discussing the bondage of the five sheaths, we found that the easy way to dissolve these five sheaths was to raise them to the cosmic level. If we think of the cosmic humanity, we will realise how small we are. This little mind is a part of a cosmic mind. Coming to the bliss sheath, we discover that bliss comes from the *anandamaya kosha* and it has its full play when we are in deep sleep. Its counterpart is God, but God is not the highest Brahman. Every segment of this universe is filled with bliss. We are very selective. If we can rid ourselves of this selectivity, then we will experience only bliss.

Class 12: The Evaluation of Joy

In this chapter of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* we are dealing with the *ananda mimamsa*,

the evaluation of joy. Different beings naturally experience joy differently. The whole universe is taken into consideration—superhuman and human. What kind of joy is available to each different kind of being? Of course, we could say that a lot of imagination has been used here, but it does not matter in our study because everything is imagination, except the true Self.

We have discussed how it is that the Self is becoming everything. Everything is the Self, if we take away the names and forms. Names and forms are the different costumes worn by the Self. The true Self appears in the costume of time and space. If we take away the names and forms of time and space, we will experience Brahman. Our experience of our body-consciousness is really an experience of Brahman. If we take away our body everything is the appearance of the Self.

It is quite possible that there are many other different kinds of beings on other planets and spheres. That is taken for granted in Indian spiritual literature. The student of Vedanta has to know that. To reject and renounce and be open to everything is ultimately our goal. If someone says there are beings with four arms, we agree because the creative genius of God is endless. The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* tells us that this creation is the breath of God. As easy as breathing, Brahman projects all of these forms. Not only that, but the scriptures boldly say that there are cycles of the projection of creation.

(To be continued)

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BALABODHA

Ancient Wisdom Made Easy

Samsara

SAMSARA is a commonly used Sanskrit word. It is used by people, who do not even know Sanskrit, as it is present in almost every Indian language. The widely used meaning of the word 'samsara' is worldliness, but it is necessary to see the other meanings and the origins of this word. This is a Sanskrit word. Sanskrit is a classical language like Greek, Latin, and Persian. And in Sanskrit, as in most classical languages, most words are derived from a stem or root.

The word 'samsara' is derived from the root *sri*, which means to run, flow, speed, glide, move, go, spring up, exert oneself, racing, blow, escape, run away, run after, pursue, go towards, betake one's self to, go against, attack, assail, cross, traverse, begin to flow, and be gone. When the prefix *sam* is added to the root *sri*, the word *samsri* is born. *Samsri* means to flow together with, to go about, wander, walk, roam, passing through a succession of states, pass through, transmigration, enter, be diffused, spread into, come forth, introduce, push into, put off, defer, use, and employ. *Samsri* can also be changed to form the word *samsarana*, which means going about, walking or wandering through, passing through a succession of states, birth and rebirth of living beings, the world, the unobstructed march of an army, the commencement of a war or battle, a highway, a principal road, and a resting place for passengers near the gates of a city.

The same word can take a different shape of the widely used word 'samsara', which means going or wandering through, undergoing transmigration, course, passage, passing through a

succession of states, circuit of mundane existence, transmigration, metempsychosis, the world, secular life, and worldly illusion.

'Samsara' denotes a cyclical phenomenon in general. The repeated births and deaths, the many lifetimes that a person goes through before attaining moksha or complete freedom from suffering and also from transmigration is called 'samsara'. The universe that is essentially born out of ignorance about the ultimate Reality, is also called 'samsara' in the sense of a cyclical bondage. An individual soul is caught up in the cycle of samsara because of the results of actions done with the idea of an agency or the ideas of 'I am the doer' and 'I am the experiencer'. Every action performed with any of these ideas leads to the production of an effect or result called karma, which in turn results in the need for producing a condition where such an effect can bring results. Since such a condition has to be produced and since such condition cannot be achieved in the same lifetime, a person has to take birth again in another lifetime, in another place and time, to provide for the conditions necessary for the effects to produce results. Till a person has the ideas of agency, this repeated cycle of births and deaths continues.

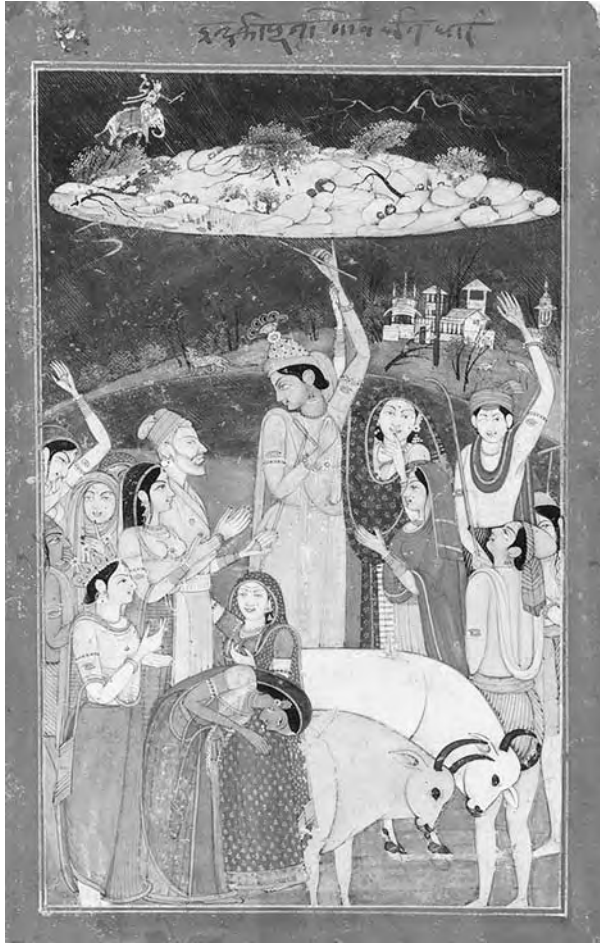
The Vedas denounce samsara and dispassion towards samsara or the cyclical worldliness is considered to be one of the important prerequisites to spiritual practices. Buddhism considers samsara to be the wheel of existence or *bhavachakra* that is nothing but a cycle of suffering, which has to be transcended by attaining nirvana.



TRADITIONAL TALES

The Miracle That Brought Faith

(Continued from the previous issue)



PAINTING: KRISHNA HOLDING MOUNT GOVARDHAN / CA. 1790 / COLOUR ON PAPER / ATTRIBUTED TO MOLA RAM (1760–1833)

THE ROBBER SAW the faces of Sri Krishna and Balarama, became unsteady, fainted, and fell on the ground. He stood up again. Unbeknownst to him, tears flowed from eyes. He wiped them. The robber in him raised again. He said in a loud voice of rebuke: ‘Don’t go! Stop! Remove all your ornaments and keep them on the ground!’

Sri Krishna (in fear): ‘Why should we give you our ornaments?’

Robber: ‘Will you not? See what I am holding in my hand!’ He brandishes the knife that he is holding.

Sri Krishna: ‘What would you do with the knife?’

Robber: ‘If you don’t give me your ornaments, I will stab you and bring out your entrails.’

Sri Krishna: ‘No, we won’t give our ornaments.’

Robber: ‘Is that so? See how I twist your ears,

snatch your ornaments, and throw you off into this river.'

Sri Krishna (screaming): 'Oh, father! Robber! Robber!'

The robber pounces on Sri Krishna and tries to shut Sri Krishna's mouth with his hands. What a surprise! The moment he touched Sri Krishna's body, it was as if he received an electric shock. He fainted and fell on the ground. After a while, he rose and cried: 'Kids! Who are you? The more I see you, the more beautiful you appear to me. It is impossible for me to bat an eyelid. Ah! What is this? Tears are flowing from my eyes. I am horripilating. I have known! I have known! Both of you are indeed gods; you are not human beings!'

Sri Krishna (smiling): 'No, sir! We are human

beings; shepherd-boys. We are the sons of Nanda, the king of Gokula.'

The robber said: 'What a wonderful smile! Kids, you may go. Go, graze your cows, go. I don't want your ornaments. Please keep your holy feet on my head, just once. That is enough for me. Let me see, please stretch your beautiful hands. Ah! By touching you, my body, mind, and soul have been filled with bliss. I have no desire of going anywhere now. Kids, I will stand here itself. I will wait for you with my eyes on the road. Please make it a practice to give me darshan once in the morning and once in the evening. That is enough. I don't need anything else. Kids, the apple of my eye, I say just this: If you don't give me your darshan any day, I will writhe in pain and give up my life itself.'

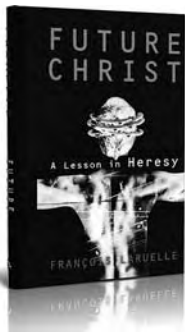
(To be continued)



PAINTING: RADHA-KRISHNA / FRESCO / 16TH-20TH CENTURY / CITY PALACE, UDAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

REVIEWS

For review in PRABUDDHA BHARATA,
publishers need to send **two** copies of their latest publications



Future Christ: A Lesson in Heresy

François Laruelle

Trans. Anthony Paul Smith

Continuum International Publishing
Group, 80 Maiden Lane, Suite 704,
New York, NY 10038, USA. www.continuumbooks.com. 2010. \$35. xxx + 154
pp. HB. ISBN 9781441118332.

This book is the first of three volumes of 'autonomous works, coordinated by the material of their themes and objects and unified by their practice of thought', which François Laruelle calls the 'Triptych' (ix). Intended to be a philosophico-religious treatment of the 'heretic' question that theology and religious studies apparently raise but fail to lead it to its logical conclusion. Laruelle intends to do this treatment by a non-conventional approach in the streams of heretics, mysticism, and Eros. Laruelle gives a glossary of terms that he invents and rediscovers throughout this book but cautions the reader to be not bound by the definitions and definitely not to systematise these definitions to some other 'ism' as that 'would be contrary to the spirit of non-philosophy which is a practice of—and in—thought' (x).

This book is the first English translation of Laruelle's works and it is indeed interesting that it should be a book on religion. However, Laruelle, in the spirit of his 'non-philosophy' that he has now rechristened as 'nonstandard philosophy', rips off the authority structure of religion that so often meddles with free thought. Laruelle aims to and is greatly successful in reducing the questions of religion and related philosophy 'to some fundamental elements' (ix). The philosopher and the priest have exercised their authority to structure and stifle thought. Laruelle stands at the intersection of philosophy and religion, praxis and

theology, precept and experience, and examines the core of religion bereft of the shell that threatens to eat up the kernel.

Anthony Paul Smith has done an excellent job of making the text accessible, which is highly difficult, even in the French original. In his introduction, Smith alerts the reader that this book is a 'strange, alien treatise' but clarifies that it is just 'an effort to think differently' and not 'some postmodern pastiche' that has gnawed into the minds of philosophers and prowls the corridors of philosophy departments of universities worldwide (xi). It would be heretical to characterise this book in any manner, because Laruelle wants the approach of this work to be completely heretical, not even adhering to heresy; he wants it to be a heretical of heretics. Laruelle intends to develop a thought that would be something of a non-Christianity but would not have any 'ity' to bind the heresy. The reader is encouraged to have an independent thought process on these lines.

This book is a call to attain the salvation that religion promises by being a decent human being, by being absorbent of the suffering of the victim, and by stripping religion of its decorative covers that neither salvage nor console. Smith positions his choice of translating Laruelle itself as an 'example of the constructive aspect of his [Laruelle's] science of philosophy (what is mistakenly taken to be a mere critique) after his break with philosophical (self-)sufficiency. It is an example of the positive non-philosophical programme of heresy' (xix). The first English translation of Laruelle, this book introduces his thought to the Anglophone readers in a layered manner. And one cannot miss the uncanny similarity of thought that Laruelle shares with Swami Vivekananda in emphasising the functional and experiential aspects of religion. What Laruelle spearheads, much in the fashion of Swamiji, is

a new religion that focusses more on the victim and the human based on an ideology that refuses to be merely an ideology and prefers to be humane, evolving with humanity.

Universalising religion by concentrating on the common features of all religions yet embracing the special features of different religions was preached by Swamiji. Laruelle envisions future Christianity and a universal non-religion. Here, 'determination-in-the-last-identity', a core concept of nonstandard philosophy that is 'opposed to the reciprocal or circular causality of philosophy and to its limited unilateral modes', (xxix) is of paramount importance. The human being is the future Christ for Laruelle, who clarifies the task of non-philosophy: 'There are impassable misunderstandings, that philosophy cannot overcome ... in its usual way, the operation of non-philosophy is just that of making this visible in philosophy' (18). He denounces the present state of religion: 'Ethics and religions exude an infantile hope, a yearning for a silly beatitude and bring to light a hypocritical theodicy. They are the devices-of-the-church, they lull human beings into being inserted into the system of Grand Conformity and to make themselves into subjects-of-the-World' (20). These words echo Swamiji's statement: 'Religions of the world have become lifeless mockeries.'

Laruelle wants a theodicy that transcends theodicy and emphasises the 'man' or the victim: 'The man of whom we speak is his own real identity, the irreducible core which makes him human and does not just differentiate him from the rest of Creation, to which he otherwise belongs, but from this as well' (23). Laruelle explains the role of the non-Christianity he proposes: 'However open it may be, "the-Christianity" is still a system-religion in convertibility and triad, an aborted and normalized madness that secures in a hallucinatory way its appropriation of Man-in-person. Non-Christianity breaks it down by dualysing the unitary "essence" of theologico-humanist man and gives him another birth, that of a Future Christ, separated *from* the World and so giving aid to it all the more. As for Gnostic resentment against God, the World, and Creation, which

brandishes against them a spiritual fire, one can rather see it as an occasional cause for a non-Christianity that does not respond to the fire of persecution with the fire of intransigence' (26). He also clarifies the three-pronged role of future Christianity: 'Future Christianity finally posses [*sic*] three sources, mixed within "the-Christianity" in the historical sense, but that we distinguish and isolate in order to determine or unify them in-the-last-identity by Man-in-person, and so differently than in a religion. The first is the properly Gnostic experience of the definition of man. ... The second is the more general heretical aspect of the separation with the World. ... The third is the specifically Christian aspect of universal salvation, for the World and for every man, that works through the person of Christ' (29).

Lest anyone hastily conclude Laruelle's attempts to be atheist, he explains:

We do not practice or import any atheism, in undertaking an exercise of thought we sufficiently 'believe' in God, Christ, and more so in the Hell where these shadows live. We believe in a God who claims to take the place of Man-in-person and who is in Hell. In a Hell whose other name is 'the-World' dominated by the Principle of Sufficient Church. But also in a 'non-Christian' Christ rather than an Anti-Christ. This is the human trinity that we oppose to all those all-too-divine religions. A trinity that is no longer of three persons, but of Man-as-final-identity announcing his being-human in the World within the radically subjective figure of a Future Christ that every man who is in-hell has in becoming. ... The conception of separated Man is more than the foundation; it the cause which determines the efficacy of this transformation of ancient theological personages (30).

For all thinking persons willing to dive deep into the core of religion or religious practices, this book is a must read. It is also essential study to understand Laruelle.

Editor
Prabuddha Bharata

MANANA

**Exploring thought-currents from around the world.
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***The Conversational Firm:
Rethinking Bureaucracy in the Age of
Social Media***

Catherine J Turco

Columbia University Press, 61 West 62 Street, New York, NY 10023. 2016. xiii + 253 pp. \$35. HB. ISBN 9780231178983.

AT FOUR O'CLOCK one Thursday, more than two hundred of TechCo's employees and most of its senior management team filed into an assembly room just off the company's first floor atrium. TechCo (a pseudonym) is a social media marketing firm that sells software and services to help businesses promote themselves online by using everything from email to YouTube videos, from corporate blogs to Facebook and Twitter. Recently, customer satisfaction with the company's software had declined, and customer churn (i.e., attrition) was on the rise. Folks were heading to an open meeting to discuss the issue.

In fact, the organization had been discussing the spike in customer churn for weeks now on its corporate wiki. TechCo's COO, Keith, had posted over a hundred pages of customer survey and financial performance data online for everyone to see. The results were not pretty. Many corporate executives would shudder to disseminate such information so broadly, but TechCo executives share this level of detail with the entire workforce, and employees typically respond with ideas, opinions, and questions. Ever since Keith's post about churn, they had been doing just that.

To keep the conversation going, the company was now holding one of its 'Hack Nights'. Hack Nights are voluntary events where employees share their ideas and, along with senior management,



collectively hack away at problems they care about. This evening's discussion was being led by three managers, all in their mid- to late twenties. Carolyn from sales, Alexis from consulting services, and Rob from customer support stood before the crowd chatting casually, waiting for the room to settle. After a few minutes, Carolyn stepped forward, greeted everyone with a familiar, 'Hey Guys,' and reminded them why they were there. Then she invited anyone with an idea to come to the front of the room and share it with the group.

The tightly packed room shuffled and shifted as thirty or so TechCoers made their way forward and formed a line. In the queue were a mix of entry-level employees hired in the last year, some longer-tenured employees, and even a few senior executives. Some worked in departments directly affected by the topic of the evening, but others were from departments more removed from the issue such as IT and personnel. One by one, people took the microphone and offered their suggestions.

After the last individual spoke, Rob addressed the crowd. He listed the topics just raised and assigned each to different corners of the room, instructing people to assemble around whichever one they wanted to discuss. At the end of the night, he explained, they would all come back together, and each team would have ten minutes to share its

specific recommendations. Pausing for a moment, Rob smiled and said, 'Are you all ready for a period of controlling chaos? Go to your corners!'

Almost instantaneously, loud music was piped in, and people began moving about the packed room in a human approximation of bumper cars. At one point, it seemed as if the entire right half of the room was trying to move left, while the left half was trying to move right, leaving everyone stuck in place. Eventually the traffic jam broke and people found their way to their desired corners. The music and sheer number of people talking all at once made brainstorming in larger groups impossible. Employees took to writing their ideas on large flip boards instead and then breaking off into small groups of four or five, pulling chairs together and leaning in to hear one another above the din.

For the next several hours, they worked like this. Pizza arrived at some point and boxes surfed their way around the room, prompting short breaks as team members headed to the kitchen to grab beer from the company's free-beer fridge. Around nine o'clock, after the group had reassembled and then disposed, a few stragglers collected empty pizza boxes, flipping the assembly room lights off, and headed home.

From the chaos and free beer, to executives sharing information that others might conceal, to lower-level employees weighing in on high-level business issues, this is not what we expect to see in a conventional corporate environment. That is precisely the point.

'The old ways of doing things don't work anymore', TechCo's CEO told me the first time we met. The 'old ways' he was referring to were most everything we think of when we think of a conventional bureaucratic firm: vertical hierarchy, centralized decision making, formal rules and guidelines to control employee behavior, corporate communication that follows the rigid lines

of the firm's organizational chart, and a staid culture that stifles individual expression. Today more and more firms are questioning these ways as outmoded. At TechCo, the CEO explained, 'We're trying to build a postmodern organization that matches the new reality'.

That new reality is the social media revolution. Since its inception, social media has profoundly transformed not just how people communicate with one another socially but also how they communicate in and with firms. Inside organizations, employees are increasingly digital natives who grew up with Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, and the like. Born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s, millennials are the fastest growing portion of the labor force and widely noted for their comfort and skill on social media and their preference for newer forms of communication like chat and text over older ones like the phone and email. They are accustomed to more open expression and dialogue than generations past, and they are carrying those expectations into the workplace. Others are too.

In the market, customers are no longer content to just download information about a company's products or services from static corporate websites. They turn to social media to weigh in directly, sharing their opinions and experiences for hundreds, sometimes thousands, to see. When they do, they expect businesses to answer back on those very same platforms. Just like employees, today's customers expect more open, ongoing dialogue from corporations.

Across the corporate landscape, firms are trying to make sense of these cultural and technological changes. They are trying to determine what it all means not only for their business models but also for the very form and structure their organizations take. To investigate this myself, I decided to study TechCo up close, living inside the firm as an ethnographer for ten months.



REPORTS

New Mission Centres

A new branch centre of the Ramakrishna Mission has been started at **Davanagere** in Karnataka. The address of the centre is 'Ramakrishna Mission, 7th Main Road, MCC 'A' Block, Davanagere, Karnataka 577 004', phone: 08192-220911, and email: <davanagere@rkmm.org>.

A branch centre of the Ramakrishna Mission has also been started at **Dibrugarh**, Assam, with the address 'Ramakrishna Mission, Purnananda Road, Dibrugarh, Assam 786 001', phone: 90518 89322, and email: <dibrugarh@rkmm.org>.

Values Education and Youth Programmes

Delhi centre held a values education workshop on 27 January 2018, attended by 20 teachers.

Halasuru Math conducted a symposium for teachers on 11 January in which about 200 teachers from various schools and colleges took part.

Haripad Math held two camps on 4 and 5 January which were attended by 206 students.

Jalpaiguri centre, in association with Kankur-gachhi Math, held talks and a quiz competition at Khagrabari in Cooch Behar on 31 December which were attended by nearly 200 people.

Salem Ashrama conducted three values education programmes at three colleges in Salem district from 27 December to 23 January which were attended by 548 students in all.

Celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Abhedanandaji Maharaj

On 3 and 4 February, **Rajkot** centre held a national seminar on Indian culture and philosophy, attended by about 800 delegates from ten states.

On 29, 30, and 31 January, **RKMVERI**, formerly

called **Vivekananda University**, conducted a national seminar on Sanskrit spread over eight sessions. Srimat Swami Shivamayanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Suvirananda, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, and many other eminent people and scholars spoke in the seminar, which was attended by about 400 people. An *Ashtavadhanam*, a programme in Sanskrit, was also held.

News of Branch Centres

Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Lucknow hospital has been accredited by NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers) for a period of three years from 8 January.

On the occasion of Magh Mela, **Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Allahabad** held a medical camp, discourses, devotional singing and an exhibition on Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda at Triveni Sangam from 1 to 31 January. In all, 14,757 patients were treated at the medical camp and nearly 80,000 people visited the exhibition.

A statue of Swamiji has been installed at **Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan, Kolkata**. Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, unveiled the statue through remote control on 8 January, the holy birthday of Swamiji.


The platinum jubilee of **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur**, the diamond jubilee of its Vidyalaya, higher secondary school, and the golden jubilee of its Industrial Training Centre were celebrated from 26 to 29 January. Srimat Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj, President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna

Mission, Vice-Presidents Srimat Swami Vagishanandaji Maharaj and Srimat Swami Shivamayandaji Maharaj, Swami Suvirananda, Governor of West Bengal Sri Keshari Nath Tripathi, and a number of other dignitaries took part in the various public meetings held in this connection. Seminars, cultural events, and a fair were also held, and a special postal cover was released to commemorate the event. In all, about 600 monastic brothers and two lakh students, alumni, teachers, and devotees attended the celebrations.

Ramakrishna Mission, Aalo celebrated its golden jubilee from 2 to 4 February. Srimat Swami Gautamanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission and Adhyaksha, Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Sri Kiren Rijiju, some ministers of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, and several other dignitaries, teachers, and students addressed the meetings. A commemorative volume, two books, and a DVD were also released on the occasion. Cultural programmes were held on all days of the celebration. Prizes were distributed to the winners in different cultural competitions and sports events that had been conducted earlier in commemoration of the golden jubilee. About 2,000 people attended the programme on each day.

Ramakrishna Math, Chennai celebrated Vivekananda Navaratri from 6 to 14 February by holding lectures and cultural programmes at Vivekananda House, Chennai, in commemoration of Swami Vivekananda's nine-day stay there from 6 to 14 February 1897. Sri Banwarilal Purohit, Governor of Tamil Nadu, inaugurated the renovated Vivekananda Park and the newly built Sister Nivedita Auditorium next to the Vivekananda House, on 8 February. Mr Kenneth Juster, USA Ambassador to India, visited the Vivekananda House on 12 February.

Relief

Distress Relief: The headquarters and the centres mentioned below distributed various items, shown against their names, to needy people: **India: Baghbazar:** 100 saris, 67 shirts, and 97 trousers on 31 December; **Belgharia:** 3,676 shirts, 2,533 trousers, and 4,440 belts and wallets from 3 September to 20 December; **Bamunmura:** 480 saris from 27 to 31 December; **Baranagar Mission:** 403 shirts, 434 tops, and 920 trousers from 25 to 29 December; **Chapra:** 1,136 shirts, 1,286 tops, and 3,363 trousers from 22 August to 25 October; **Cooch Behar:** 158 saris, 20 dhotis, and 4 lungis on 8 January; **Headquarters:** 100 saris from 10 to 20 December; **Kamarpukur:** 1,995 shirts, 2,056 tops, and 4,284 trousers from 10 November to 14 December; **Kankurgachhi:** 34 saris, 141 children's garments, 113 notebooks, 113 pens, and 113 geometry boxes on 10 January; **Koyilandy:** 119 saris and 238 solar lanterns on 14 January; **Lucknow:** 3,319 shirts, 8,618 tops, and 3,613 trousers from 2 to 22 January; **Medinipur:** 1,161 shirts, 807 tunics, 1,774 trousers, 299 leggings, 200 saris, and 65 dhotis from 20 November to 22 December; **Narottam Nagar:** 290 shirts, 360 T-shirts, 640 trousers, 130 tops, and 251 other ladies garments from 30 December to 23 January. **Rahara:** 236 saris, 68 dhotis, 10 chaddars, 3 lungis, 12 kg baby food, and 650 bottles of hair oil from 29 December to 23 January; **Sargachhi:** 2,070 shirts, 1,074 tops, and 2,078 trousers from 10 September to 20 December; **Silchar:** 957 mosquito-nets, 426 children's garments, and 336 packets of *Horlicks* (500 gm each) from 11 November and 22 December; **Srinagar:** 300 electric hot water bottles from 31 October to 26 November; **Vijayawada:** 82 saris, 17 dhotis, 17 towels, 100 kg wheat flour, 250 kg dal, 100 kg dalia (broken wheat), 100 kg suji (semolina), 100 litres edible oil, and 25 kg garlic on 30 December. **Bangladesh: Chittagong:** 150 saris on 8 January. 



Preservation and Extension of Shyampukur Bati, the most important and sacred tirtha of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

Dear Friend/devotee/well-wisher,

You all know that Sri Ramakrishna spent the last few months of his life (naralila) in Shyampukur Bati and Cossipore.

Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Swami Vivekananda and his brother disciples stayed in Shyampukur Bati for 2 to 3 months. It was on these holy premises that Sri Ramakrishna was worshipped as Mother Kali on Kali puja night by Girish Ghosh and other devotees. Sri Ramakrishna also manifested many bhavas, and samadhis in this place.

In November 2017 this holy place was recognized as a full-fledged branch centre of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. This house is now 180 years old. For its proper preservation, comprehensive repair work is urgently needed. Further, accommodation is required to house all the inmate sadhus and also to slowly begin service activities.

To meet the above urgent needs we wish to purchase one or two nearby houses. **For this we require a minimum sum of Rupees four Crores.**

I fervently appeal to all the devotees, donors and well-wishers to donate generously to make the above project successful.

All donations are eligible for tax exemption under section 80-G of LT.Act 1961. Kindly send your donation through NC payee cheque, Demand Draft or Bank Transfer. United Bank of India, Baghbazar branch; NC No.0090010362696

IFSC: UTBI0BAZ101, MICR Code: 700027005 State Bank of India, Baghbazar Branch; Ne No. 32773763307,

IFSC: SBIN0001652, MICR Code: 700002007 For donation of Rupees Five Lakhs and above, the name of the donor will be displayed in marble stone in a suitable place.

Adhyaksha
Swami Paraswarananda
Ramakrishna Math,
Shyampukur Bati



Ramakrishna Math, Shyampukur Bati
55 A, Shyampukur Street, Kolkata 700004
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পুণ্যদর্শন মহেন্দ্রনাথ দত্ত (স্বামী বিবেকানন্দের মধ্যমভ্রাতা) মহাশয়ের অমূল্য গ্রন্থাবলীর তালিকা

কাব্য, সমালোচনা প্রভৃতি

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| ১। শ্রীশ্রী রামকৃষ্ণের অনুধ্যান | ১৩। দীন মহারাজ | ২৭। সঙ্গীতের রূপ |
| ২। লণ্ডনে স্বামী বিবেকানন্দ | ১৪। গুরুপ্রাণ রামচন্দ্রের অনুধ্যান | ২৮। নৃত্যকলা |
| ৩। শ্রীমৎ বিবেকানন্দ স্বামীজীর জীবনের ঘটনাবলী | ১৫। ভক্ত দেবেন্দ্রনাথ | ২৯। বিবিধ কবিতাবলী |
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| | ২৬। শিল্প প্রসঙ্গ | ৪০। কলিকাতার পুরাতন কাহিনী ও প্রথা |
| | | ৪১। বাংলা ভাষার প্রধাবন |

মহেন্দ্রনাথ প্রসঙ্গে গ্রন্থাবলী

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Works of Punyadarshan Mahendra Nath Dutta (second brother of Swami Vivekananda) Allied Publications

Religion, Philosophy, Psychology:

1. Energy 2. Mind 3. Metaphysics 4. Ego 5. Ethics 6. Action 7. Biology 8. Mentation 9. Theory of Sound 10. Theory of Light 11. Theory of Vibration 12. Theory of Motion 13. Lectures on Philosophy 14. Cosmic Evolution-Part-1 & Part II 15. Thoughts on Religion 16. Logic of Possibilities 17. Natural Religion 18. Triangle of Love 19. Formation of the Earth

Social Sciences :

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Literary Criticism, Epic etc. :

1. Appreciation of Michael Madhusudan and Dinabandhu Mitra 2. Language and Grammar & Rhetoric 3. Dissertation on Poetry 4. Nala and Damayanti 5. Kurukshetra

Translation :

1. Reflections on Sri Sri Ramakrishna 2. Childhood of Swami Vivekananda 3. Nari Adhikar (Hindi) 4. Manab Kendric Sabhyata (Hindi)

Allied Books :

1. Dialectics of Land Economics of India by Dr. Bhupendra Nath Dutta A.M. (Brown)

D.Phil. (Hamburg) The Mohendra Publishing Committee 36/7, Sahitya Parishad Street, Kolkata 700006.

W.B. India cell no.: 9830439224 9874725737 9831752901

We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran.

Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of THE RELIGION, which is Oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best.

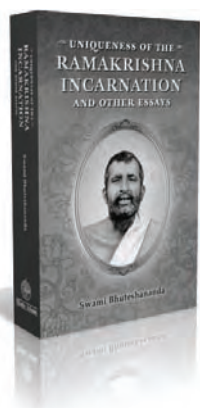
Swami Vivekananda

ABP



UNIQUENESS OF THE RAMAKRISHNA INCARNATION AND OTHER ESSAYS

Swami Bhuteshananda



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Revered Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, the twelfth President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was loved and revered by monks and devotees alike for his profound learning, untiring energy, loving heart, and, above all, his spiritual accomplishments.

During the long tenure of his spiritual ministry, Revered Maharaj delivered discourses at various places both in India and abroad in response to the earnest requests of spiritual seekers. This book is a compilation of forty-one of these discourses.

Monks and devotees would meet Swami Bhuteshanandaji nearly every day during his tenure as President of the Ramakrishna Order and ask him various questions on spiritual life. Selected questions and Maharaj's answers to them have been given at the end of the book.



Please write to:

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Phones: 91-33-22840210 / 22890898 / 22866483, Email: mail@advaitaashrama.org

Dakshinamurti Stotra with Manasollasa

Swami Harshananda

In the Indian hymnal literature, the stotras of Sri Shankaracharya occupy a unique place. They are charmingly simple, and yet, simply charming. The panegyric material of the hymns often alternates with the moral principles or spiritual values.

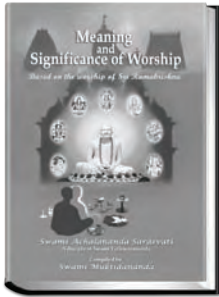
In a few rare hymns, Sri Shankaracharya has introduced masterly condensations of the doctrines of Advaita Vedanta. And, Dakshinamurti Stotra is a masterpiece among them, combining in itself poetical elegance as well as metaphysical brilliance. Sureshvara has written a varttika on this stotra called Manasollasa, 'that which exhilarates the mind'.

In this book, Revered Swami Harshananda Maharaj, a senior scholar-monk of the Ramakrishna Order, has translated into English this Dakshinamurti Stotra and Manasollasa, with lucid annotations.



Pages 248

Price ₹ 145



Pages 344

Price ₹ 150

Meaning and Significance of Worship

(Based on the worship of Sri Ramakrishna)

Swami Achalananda Sarasvati

This book deals with the meaning and significance of worship of Sri Ramakrishna. It contains the mantras in Sanskrit, roman transliteration, word-by-word meanings, and English translations, with detailed descriptions and insightful explanations of the procedures followed.

Compiling the meanings and explanations of Swami Achalananda Sarasvati, a disciple of Revered Yatiswaranandaji Maharaj and a Sanskrit scholar well-versed in Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, Swami Muktidananda has shaped the material in form of this book, with pictures and summary charts.

The present edition in new layout is further enriched with additional material and pictures.

This book is a must for all devotees of Sri Ramakrishna, especially those who perform his worship.



Please write to:

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Ref.: 079/112
08.06.18

Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama

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E-mail: <rkm_muzaffarpur@gmail.com>, <muzaffarpur@rkmm.org>, <Website: www.rkmmuzaffarpur.org>

Appeal

Introduction:

Established in the Year 1926, the Eye Infirmary in Muzaffarpur was started with the financial aid of British Governor, Lord Rutherford in the year 1947. It was affiliated with the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah, West Bengal in July 2003.

Our Vision:

Specialty in Eye, ENT, Dental, OPD for other departments, Diagnostics, Paramedical Training.

Service Rendered (2017-18):

Quality Medical Treatment in Eye Care to the Underprivileged Sections of North Bihar Districts, (Cataract operation: Full Free 2,858- SC/ST 1,089 OBC 1,365) Mobile Ophthalmic Van to reach out to villages for treating the poor, Non-Formal Education to 250 Underprivileged Children of our vicinity, Disaster Management - Organizing Relief Camps, National Youth Day Celebration, 40 Ladies get free training in Tailoring and Embroidery, Computer Awareness Training to Youths.

Present Requirements: Keeping in mind the immense potentiality of services in North Bihar Districts we require the following:

Rs. 11 Crore for construction of Ancillary Medical unit for Camp Patient's Stay, Doctor's Quarters, Paramedical Training Institute, Library, Auditorium and Office.

Rs. 3 Crore for Equipments and Machinery.

Rs.15 Lakh for Maintenance of old buildings, walls, and roads.

Rs.10 Lakh for Educational Programmes, Pujas and Celebrations for the year 2018-19.



Vivekananda Netralaya



Recovery Unit



Mobile Ophthalmic Van



Dear Friends,

With your unanimous support throughout we have started reaching out to the poor patients of North Bihar Districts by giving quality free treatments. It is our humble request to you to come forward and donate and help to make our mission a successful one.

Kindly send your contribution by Cheque/DD or by NEFT/ RTGS to A/c No. **10877071752 IFS Code: SBIN0006016** in favour of **Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muzaffarpur**. Any contribution made in favour of "Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muzaffarpur." is exempted from Income Tax u/s 80G of IT Act 1961.

Swami Bhavatmananda
Secretary



Ramakrishna Math

Village : Bishnupur (Ghoshpara)

P.O. Rajarhat Bishnupur, P.S. Rajarhat, West Bengal 700135

Mobile: 7699648789 ✉ rkm.rajarhat@gmail.com Web: www.rkmrajarhat.org

AN APPEAL

Dear Devotees & Well-wishers,

Ramakrishna Math, Rajarhat Bishnupur, which was started in 1953 at the birthplace of Swami Niranjanananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna is one of the branch centres of Ramakrishna Math & Mission, headquartered in Belur, West Bengal. The present temple was inaugurated in 1986 by Most Revered Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, who was then the Vice-President and later the 12th President of the Order.

Besides daily worship in the shrine and other special celebrations we serve the backward people of this district under the rural development project. Though the place is only about 15 km from Salt Lake, Kolkata, it is yet to see development. Most of the people are day-labourers. Presently our medical services (allopathic & homeopathy) cater to about 1000 patients per month. Our educational services includes free coaching to about 150 poor students (classes I to X) and vocational skills training in plumbing and electrical for boys and tailoring for women.

To cater to the increasing demand for medicare among the poor and to give thrust to education of the children in this area we wish to start the following service activities with munificent support from devotees, well-wishers and corporates:

Our Immediate Needs

Sl.	Description	Amount - INR
1.	Construction of New Building for Medical Dispensary	1,50,00,000
2.	Computer training centre for poor students	5,00,000
3.	Mobile medical Unit	2,00,000
4.	Text Books, copy books for students	1,00,000
5.	Value Education Programme for youth	1,00,000
6.	Thakur Seva Fund (Endowment)	5,00,000
7.	Sadhu Seva Fund (Endowment)	5,00,000
8.	Monthly ration for widow mothers	3,00,000
9.	Community Hall and a Guest House for Devotees	10,00,000

We appeal to you to generously extend your financial / material support for the above. You may choose any one or two heads and mark your contribution. Donations however humble would be thankfully acknowledged.

Cheque/Draft may kindly be sent in favour of **“Ramakrishna Math, Rajarhat Bishnupur”** at the address given above. You may also directly transfer to our A/c No. **30496330847** in State Bank of India, IFS Code: **SBIN0006208** Branch: **Lauhati**.

May the blessing of the Holy Trio and Swami Niranjananandaji be upon you all.

With loving namaskars and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Swami Harimayananda
Adhyaksha

The best guide in life is strength.
In religion, as in all other matters,
discard everything that weakens
you, have nothing to do with it.
—Swami Vivekananda

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Swami Vivekananda's statue
at Museum, RKM New Delhi

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